

S I M P L I F I E D  
*H O M E*  
S E W I N G

*By*

HELEN HALL

WITH COMPLETE DIAGRAMS

1943

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## Preface

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THE primary purpose of this volume is to present simplified sewing methods that can easily be learned through application and practice and that will make home sewing an interesting and profitable hobby. The secondary purpose is to present material that will help the home sewer to become an expert dressmaker—if she so desires. This profession is not crowded and is open to all ages.

The practical experience of the author has been gained through love of the needle, many years of personal sewing, a professional study of all phases of garment construction—including two systems of costume design—and work in the field as a professional modiste.

Her search for a solution of the individual fitting problem led through the details of many drafting systems and finally developed into an unerring system of fitting which centers around the posture of the figure as well as the disproportionate distribution of flesh.

In the portion of the garment *above* the armhole lies the key to comfort for the moving figure. The complications that arise in fitting this section were heretofore ignored. The fitting instructions given in this book meet these and other complicated problems of sewing in so simple a way that the home sewer can easily learn to fit herself and others.

HELEN HALL



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## How to Learn to Sew

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SEWING becomes an interesting pastime when each operation develops perfectly without the struggle of numerous alterations and rippings. This is only possible when the construction is understood step by step so that the garment can be made without wasted time and effort.

The beginner should not attempt to cut the first dress from the most difficult material, and a complicated pattern for the first dress, even of the simplest design, will contain many problems that should have been mastered previously.

The first dress should be sleeveless or made with loose, low armholes to avoid sleeve-fitting difficulties. The pattern should be of very few sections—the number of sections is usually given on the back of the pattern envelope. The dress should be plain, without pleats, tucks, sheering, or pointed sections, as each of these decorations develops an additional problem that should be learned after the first dress is made.

The different problems encountered make sewing interesting, for each garment will contain something new that will unfold easily if the principles of sewing are understood. Sewing is only difficult when these fundamentals are not mastered.

A firmly woven print offers an excellent material for beginners. Many attractive fabrics in small figures or checks also will be encouraging for the beginner to work on, as these figures and checks tend to obliterate errors in sewing.

The pattern should be selected first, then the instructions should be read or the salesgirl asked as to the kind of material to be used with the pattern.

*Many failures in sewing are attributed to inappropriate choice of material for the pattern used. Simplicity should also predominate in the first dress. The beginner should not attempt to be too original and thus become conspicuous in her clothes. A simple dress made in the prevailing style, of a popular fabric for the season, will not be conspicuous, and when the dress is fitted and made according to the instructions given in this course of lessons, the garment will be a success and will be a pleasure to wear.*

The beginner should read each lesson pertaining to the subject encountered when making the garment. She should experiment with each detail as it is presented. If she works out each subject step by step as it is explained in the text, it will unfold much easier than when she tries to understand all of the details from the text and illustrations.

## HOW TO LEARN TO SEW

The principles of sewing can thus be learned at home or at school, on a small table or at a desk, with only a few sewing tools. All that is necessary for study and experiment is a paper of pins, needle and thread, thimble and scissors, ruler and pencil, a roll of crepe paper of any color, and this book. The crepe paper should be cut into two ten-inch rolls, and the sewing equipment should be kept in a box. The beginner should paste all her sewing samples in a loose-leaf note book to keep for reference.

The crepe paper offers many advantages: It sews easily, lies flat, has a decided lengthwise grain of material, can be pressed and creased with the fingers without the use of an iron, can be pencil-marked easily, and does not stretch unless pulled. It is also more encouraging as well as cheaper to practice sewing with paper than with cloth, as paper may be discarded for a fresh piece and no threads need to be ripped.

Ten-inch squares of soft, firm cotton fabric can also be kept in the sewing box for pick-up stitch experiments, as practice stitches cannot be made in paper. Samples of various materials should also be used for experiments in the later lessons.

The beginner who has never made a dress will find it more encouraging to make the first dress for a tiny tot rather than for herself. It will cost but little, will require no fitting, will embody all the sewing experiments necessary for making an adult dress; the seams will be short, the pattern is small, and the garment will be most attractive when finished.

The young girl will find it most interesting to make infants' garments first. The material is soft and easy to sew, the seams are short, and the finished lesson is attractive. The finished garments would cost but little and could be used for doll clothes or given away.

Later, the creation of a dress for herself with her own hands will give her a joy never to be forgotten.

**PART I**

**First Steps in Sewing**



# CHAPTER I

## Sewing Equipment

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### THE NECESSARY TOOLS

A modern sewing room, well equipped with all conveniences, is every home sewer's dream; but this luxury is seldom enjoyed by the average home sewer of moderate means. Her sewing room may be her bedroom or her kitchen and may contain only a few tools with which to work, but her sewing may be a work of art.

An elaborate array of sewing tools is convenient but not essential. All that is necessary to make the first dress are a pair of sharp shears, a thimble that fits, plenty of pins, an iron and a table, and needle and thread. The skill and not the tools perfects the garment.

The sewing machine is not only a convenience but a necessity, if professional results are to be attained. The speed of the present day demands quick action, and this is especially important if sewing is to be interesting.

Sewing machine

Beautiful garments are often handmade, but the machine-made garment is universally used and is much quicker to make. Only the expert seamstress should attempt to make a garment entirely by hand, especially the fitted type.

Sewing machines, both treadle and electric, are of many styles. The choice of the machine may be made through actual test of some particular type of machine or through the personal recommendation of a friend.

Patterns are made for the convenience of the home sewer. They are made in various designs and sizes. Each pattern is carefully tested to make sure that each section fits its matching portion. Fitting must be accomplished for each individual figure, as all figures are not similar. If a pattern does not fit an individual, the fault usually lies in

Patterns

## SEWING EQUIPMENT

variations of the individual from the standard size and not in the pattern. It is, therefore, essential to check the individual's measurements with the pattern before cutting (see *Fitting tissue patterns to measurements*).

**Iron**



The iron is the seamstress's best friend, if she knows how and when to use it. Its use will save much time and will make her work more expert than would many hours spent in basting. The iron is used in practically every step in constructive sewing and should be ready at all times. As the kitchen, where the family iron and ironing board can be used, is not always the best place to sew, it is advisable to purchase a two- or three-pound pressing iron such as is generally used when traveling. This small iron is easier to use than is the family iron; it can be used to better advantage to press corners and short seams; it can be easily lifted for pressing while the home sewer is seated at a card table; it requires little electricity, and a good model will retain the heat. This traveling iron and a small pressboard (described later) should be kept close at hand at all times while sewing. A large iron, however, should be used for tailoring and final pressing.

**Card table**

A card table placed to the left of the sewing machine will be found most convenient for cutting, basting, and pressing. The same chair will be used for both machine sewing and card-table work.

A flat board or heavy cardboard can be padded and placed on the card table, to be used for pressing with the small iron. Thus, one can cut and baste, press and stitch, without leaving the chair.

**Shears with raised handles**



Good shears are important—shears that actually cut a true line and do not hackle the goods. Shears are the large-size cutting instrument; smaller sizes are called scissors. The larger the hands and the heavier the material to cut, the larger the shears should be. The tailor uses very heavy shears, but the dressmaker, with lighter-weight material to cut and with smaller hands, should use the smaller shears for cutting.

Shears should be carefully selected for cutting, the style with the raised handles being preferable. When such shears are held in a cutting position, the goods is not raised as high off the table as when shears that have straight handles are used. Dressmaking shears should measure from nine to ten inches the full length of the blades, including the

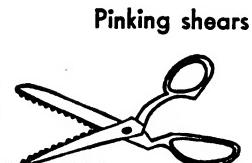
handle. They should be kept sharp at all times and reserved for cutting cloth *only*. Do not use cloth-cutting shears for cutting paper or for general utility. If you do, the keen edge will be ruined.

Scissors are smaller than shears and are used for small cutting, trimming, and ripping. Those with regular-style straight handles are satisfactory, but they should have a wide space for the fingers. Single finger spaces on sewing scissors make them uncomfortable to use. Scissors can be of any size, but those that are six to seven inches in length are perhaps best.

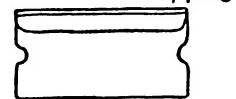
Left-handed shears are a boon to the left-handed woman. She alone can appreciate this convenience, as the right-handed shears bruise her hand when she is cutting heavy material.

Scissors with large finger sections

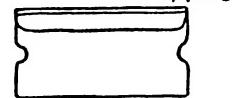
Left-handed shears



Pinking shears



Razor blades for ripping



Tape, small rule, long rule, square

The modern dressmaker's cutting tool is the pinking shears, made sufficiently lightweight to be handled easily. The edges of all seams are finished with notched edges as they are cut; a valuable aid to the woman who sews.

A razor blade, although not a necessity, is another sewing convenience. Select the type with the ridge on one edge. This type is used in the Gem safety razor. If old blades are not available, new ones can be purchased reasonably. A safety blade ripper with a handle can also be purchased.

Measuring equipment also must be at hand. The good dressmaker cannot sew accurately without it. Purchase a heavy tapeline and do not at any time use it as string. The cheap, thin tapes will stretch and often are not true. If the tapeline is heavy, it will not be abused quickly and will retain its shape. Keep a small ruler in the sewing basket, for it will be used often; a clearly marked foot rule is excellent.

The yardstick is not used so often as is the tapeline, but its use is necessary for straightening long lines. The tailor's square is also a convenience.

The thimble is not only a convenience but a necessity for sewing rapidly with fine stitches. Select a thimble that actually fits the shape of the finger. The long tapering finger requires a long tapering thimble. The blunt finger requires a short blunt thimble. Therefore, select the thimble carefully; it should not be loosely fitted or it will fall off, nor should it compress the end of the finger. It should

Thimble that fits



## SEWING EQUIPMENT

### Dressmaker's pins No. 4

stay on the finger and be comfortable. If the thimble insists on falling off the finger, place a narrow strip of adhesive tape inside of it to make it smaller.

An abundance of pins is a necessity that is often forgotten. Many pins are needed to fasten a pattern to the material, for the whole pattern should be pinned before cutting. After the garment is cut, practically every portion of it is pinned to place before beginning to baste or stitch. Use number 4 pins, which are of a convenient size to hold. Box pins are also more convenient than are pins in the paper, for they are easily picked up when working. Whether pins in papers or in a box are purchased, place a handful in a small box with a closely fitted lid for general use and keep the remainder for a reserve supply. Keep new, fresh pins for pinning paper only, for they make black marks on light materials. If pins are not available, the pattern can be basted to the material along the sewing lines, down the center fold, along dart and pleat lines, or along any portion of the pattern that must later be marked by pressing.

### Needles No. 7

A generous supply of needles is also helpful. Different sizes are not necessary, as very small needles are difficult to use and large needles are too long to use with the thimble and do not make small stitches or even sewing. Number 7 needles offer an average length and size both for hand sewing and basting.

Crewel needles, with long eyes, are excellent for those who have poor eyesight. They can be purchased in the same sizes as regular needles. A clever threading device for the sewing machine is offered at a nominal charge by the sewing-machine companies. This device makes it possible to thread through the needle. One can *feel* the threading rather than see it.

A fold of heavy material wrapped around the sewing-machine arm at the top of the machine will offer an excellent needle cushion when working. This fold may cover one of the oil holes, but it must not be forgotten when oiling the machine.

### Needle cushion

### Bodkin for tailored loops

A bodkin, which is a blunt darning needle, will also be found useful. The assorted darning needles that are found in a large paper of assorted needles usually include a bodkin; or a bodkin or a tapestry needle can be purchased at any large store. One might even be made at home in an

emergency by breaking off the point of a heavy darning needle and filing off the rough edge. A bodkin is used for turning tailored loops.

An emery bag is helpful if the hands perspire. It smooths sticky needles, prevents them from rusting, and even removes the rust from them. It also keeps the points of the needles sharp.

A tracing wheel is seldom used on cloth, but it will be found useful for duplicating pattern sections or tracing off patterns of dress sections when remodeling.

Tailor's chalk is a hard-pressed chalk manufactured in small, flat squares. It is made in both white and colors and rubs off easily. It can be sharpened to a fine edge and is used for making lines on the material. Colored chalk is used only for white material, and then sparingly. White chalk is most generally used.

The paraffin marker is only used on wool as it must be removed by pressing and will leave an oily mark on silk.

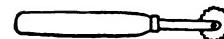
A basting board is indispensable and can be secured free of charge for the asking. The dry-goods merchant discards the cardboard on which all fabrics are rolled. Cotton fabrics are rolled on heavy cardboard that is eighteen inches long and makes an excellent board to use for basting many seams, pockets, points, corners, and inside applications. Directions for its use will be given later. To this board you may also pin firmly material that you are ripping. Use a basting board also when you are basting hems, setting zippers, attaching facings, marking button placement through buttonholes, and doing many other kinds of work.

The long boards on which woolens are rolled make excellent boards for basting pleats; or they may be padded for pressing. A small pressboard to be kept on the sewing table may be made from one of the long, 27-inch boards that are discarded from the bolts of woolen materials. Pad it like the ironing board and lay it flat on the table. This makes an excellent board to use with the small pressing iron, and it can be kept in the sewing drawer. This padded pressboard can also be slipped easily into certain semifinished sections of a garment that need pressing.

The tailor's cushion is used for pressing darts and curved seams: skirt darts, waist darts, hip seams, and armhole seams. All can be pressed into a curve with the tailor's cushion.

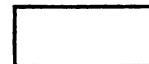
**Emery bag for smoothing needles**

**Tracing wheel**

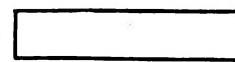


**Tailor's chalk for marking**

**Basting board**



**Pleat board**



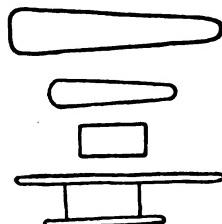
**Tailor's cushion**

## SEWING EQUIPMENT



**Sleeveboard for much pressing**

**Tailor's jack**



**Needle board for velvets**

**Cutting table—a flat hard surface**

To make a tailor's cushion, cut two egg-shaped ovals of heavy muslin eight inches wide and twelve inches long. Machine-stitch them together, leaving an open space on one side along the straight threads of material for turning. Turn and pack with inch-wide strips of torn cloth, packing the ends first.

A sleeveboard can be purchased at the department store. This board can be placed on top of the large ironing board or on the table. It will afford facilities for pressing into small places. It also raises the goods higher and closer to the eye. With the seam raised on the sleeveboard, the weight of the remainder of the dress rests on the table and does not draw the seam. The corner is also excellent for pressing darts and curved edges.

The dressmaker's ironing board or tailor's jack is in constant use. It is a large sleeveboard, and can easily be made at home by a handy man. This board, placed on top of the ironing board, brings the work closer to the eye and elevates the seam for pressing.

Measurements: The top of the board is 34 inches long or longer, 8 inches wide, and 1 inch thick. The 8-inch width is tapered to 3 inches at one end. The baseboard can be made 6 inches wide and about 24 inches long. These two boards are joined together with an edgewise board 2 by 4 by 9 inches long. The narrow end of the top board extends farther from the 2 by 4 than does the wide end. Pad the top of the board and use it for pressing. The narrow end makes an excellent rest for an inverted iron when pressing velvet.

A needle board, purchased from a tailor's supply house, is practical only for the professional dressmaker as it is very expensive. It is a special board made of blunt pins. It is used for pressing all napped materials and velvets. If a needle board is not available, place the inverted pressing iron on the end of the sleeveboard and draw the seams over the iron rather than press them flat with the iron.

It is always advisable to cut out fabric on a hard, flat surface. If a large table is not available, it is advisable to cut on the floor rather than to cut on a bed. A sheet should first be placed on the floor to keep the material clean. Card tables placed close together make an excellent cutting surface and are just the right height if one wishes to sit when

cutting. The card table also makes an excellent work table after the dress is cut.

A long mirror is a convenience. It should be placed where the light will fall on the figure standing in front of the mirror. Direct sunlight is not advisable. If a long mirror is not available, a small wall mirror can be placed on the floor at a tilted angle to secure the effect of the lower edge of the skirt. A hand mirror should also be used to see the effect of the back of the garment. A standing mirror on a table is also helpful.

**Long mirror to  
secure the "effect"**

Reserve a special place for sewing materials. If an extra drawer or set of drawers is not available, use several boxes labeled at the ends. It is helpful to use several small boxes, such as candy boxes, for separate supplies—silk thread, cotton thread, darning thread, snaps and hooks, cards of buttons, assorted buttons, bias seam bindings and tapes. All these small boxes may be kept in one large box. These time-saving devices will make sewing more interesting because nerves will not be frayed in searching for certain supplies.

**Chest of drawers  
for supplies**

If old patterns are saved, tie each complete pattern in its own envelope, using a selvage for a string. This piece of material will identify the pattern, and it will not be necessary to open all of the patterns for identification.

**Old patterns**

When the dress is finished, carefully flatten out all the scraps to be saved, roll them into a small roll, and tie with the material. This will keep the material flat and ready for use if needed later for remodeling.

**Scraps**

Use a well-worn, moistened piece of thin, white cotton material for pressing. If you have no old material, purchase two yards of cheesecloth and fold it double. This will suffice for pressing all materials except heavy woolens, for which a greater amount of moisture is needed. A second thin piece of cloth should be kept dry for pressing. In addition to these two press cloths, either a sponge or a wet washrag is necessary. Dry them out when the sewing day is over. They should not remain wet and should be laundered often.

**Press cloths**

A piece of flannel is excellent for placing over the press-board when pressing wool. The right side of the wool is placed face down on the flannel. This procedure will prevent the surface from becoming shiny and is excellent for pressing napped woolens.

**For pressing wool**

## THREAD AND NEEDLE

### Needle sizes

Small needles, no longer than number 7, make sewing interesting. Large needles are too long for hand sewing, as the long span makes it impossible to use a thimble correctly. Long, heavy needles are used for sewing on buttons, however. If there is difficulty in seeing the eye of the needle, use crewel needles with long eyes. These needles can be purchased in all sizes. Short needles are also available if preferred.

### Thread sizes

General household stitching will require thread of an average size from 60 to 70. Coarser threads are used only for heavy stitching or for sewing on buttons. Since fine cotton thread is made with the same number of strands as is the heavier thread, it is strong and durable. It will sew much easier in hand sewing and will often give better results on the sewing machine.

### Sewing-machine needles

A number 9 sewing-machine needle, which will take threads sized from 100 to 150, is used on all very sheer materials. For materials that are less sheer, such as organdy, silk, fine linen, and batiste, number 11 machine needles, taking number 80 to 100 thread, are used. Number 14 machine needles are used for all average household sewing, and heavier sizes for heavier stitching.

### Colors

Match thread to the dominant color of the material on figured fabrics, usually the background. Select thread a shade darker than the material, as the sheen of the thread makes it appear lighter. Gray thread is an excellent substitute color for many colors. Keep both light and dark gray thread in the sewing box for emergency. Thread dark thread into the needle against a light background and light thread against a dark background.

### Basting

Baste with fine, soft thread. A small cone of thread can be purchased which is much better to use for basting than is stiff basting thread. Do not use long threads; use only such a strand as can be pulled off the spool with one reach. If the dress is basted in white thread, any alterations should be basted in colored thread so as to designate the correct line for alteration.

### Knotting

Knot the end of the thread by circling the thread around the finger once only and drawing down the thread into a knot. Bastings should be tacked only when there is a

strain on the seam that is basted. Otherwise, overlap the bastings and do not tack. Closely tacked bastings are difficult to remove after the machine stitching is made over them. Heavy tacking increases this difficulty.

Thread often snarls when it is sewed by hand. This is caused by the knot being placed on the wrong end of the thread. The thread in the needle turns as each stitch is taken, and if it untwists rather than twists tighter it will cause the thread to form a tangle of tiny knots similar to the knots in a piece of twine untwisted in the fingers. If the thread knots, tack it, break it off, draw down the short end of the thread for a new knot, and proceed to sew; the snarling will be eliminated.

Use silk or rayon thread on all silk or wool material. It is strong and elastic; and since both thread and material are made of animal fiber, they will react in the same way to sun, wear, and chemical cleaning.

Since nylon thread is very elastic, it should be used on all rayon material that has any elasticity.

Strong thread should be used on rayon material of any crepe weave, and on bias-cut seams or any seams that will be strained. Cotton thread breaks more readily than does silk or nylon, and unless the seam is stretched slightly when stitching (such as a side seam), the thread will snap in wearing.

Snarling



When to use silk thread

When to use nylon thread

Thread for crepe weaves

## QUESTIONS

### The Necessary Tools

1. Is the use of a sewing machine advised?
2. Are patterns made to fit individual figures?
3. Why is an iron helpful, and what kind should be used?
4. How are card tables used in sewing?
5. What kind of shears are advised?
6. What is used for ripping?
7. What kind of measuring equipment is used?
8. Is it necessary to use a thimble?
9. What is a good, average-size needle?
10. What kind of needles should be used for poor eyesight?
11. What is a bodkin?
12. What is an emery bag used for, and when is it a necessity?
13. When is a tracing wheel used?
14. What kind of tailor's chalk is used? When?
15. What is a basting board and where may one be secured?

**SEWING EQUIPMENT**

16. What kind of a board is excellent for basting pleats, and where may it be secured?
17. How may a small pressboard be made?
18. What is a sleeveboard and when is it used?
19. What is a tailor's jack and how is it made?
20. What is a needle board?
21. What kind of a cutting surface should be used?
22. Where may a long mirror be placed to the best advantage?
23. How may a small wall mirror be used to see the lower edge of the skirt?
24. What is a handy way to keep supplies?
25. How may patterns be preserved?
26. How may scraps be preserved?

**Thread and Needle**

1. What is the average size thread?
2. What color is matched in thread for figured fabrics?
3. What is a good substitute color to use?
4. How is a needle threaded?
5. How is thread knotted?
6. What kind of thread is used for basting?
7. How long should sewing thread be?
8. What kind of thread is used to make alterations?
9. How can thread snarling be eliminated?

## CHAPTER 2

# Sewing-Machine Operations

The sewing machine is a complicated piece of mechanism designed to operate as easily as an automobile; but just as one would never attempt to drive in traffic without learning to control the car, so one should not attempt to make a garment without first learning to control the sewing machine.

Control

The electrically operated machine is controlled by either a foot or a knee lever. Practice will soon determine the right amount of pressure to use. The electric machine automatically starts correctly, but the treadle machine may run in the wrong direction unless started with the hand.

Electric machine

The treadle machine depends upon the hand as well as the feet to operate it smoothly. The right hand must be used to start the wheel either forward or backward, according to the type of machine. The hand also is used to stop the wheel.

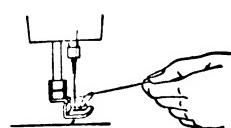
Treadle machine

Place both feet on the treadle, one higher than the other, and practice treading until an even motion is secured.

The upper thread should pull from the back of the spool for best results. After threading the needle, hold the end of the thread, drop the needle into the bobbin case, and as the needle raises it will draw up the bobbin thread.

Threading

Draw both the upper and the bobbin threads toward the *back* of the machine, *under* the needle. This will start the stitch perfectly and will prevent the threads from snarling under the seam.



Learn to stitch straight by following the lines on paper. The empty needle will puncture plain paper and test the accuracy of your stitching. You can make this into a game, stitching various designs while you are learning sewing-machine operation.

Stitching paper

**Holding the material**

Hold the bulk of the material to the left of the needle. The seam is to the right and under the arm of the machine. A machine light should fall on the needle and seam.

Place the left hand at the back of the needle and the right hand in front. Both hands hold the seam and guide it as it stitches.

The sewing machine feeds the seam through accurately; no assistance with pulling is necessary. If the seam is pulled at the back, the machine needle is drawn backward and may soon strike the needle plate and be either broken or blunted. A blunted needle has a curled point and will draw the threads of fine material in stitching.

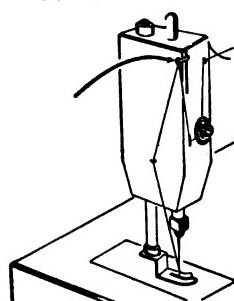
After you can follow straight lines, practice following curves. Mark curves on a sheet of paper, with curves inside of curves in one continuous line. Stitch the paper on this line.

**Practicing stitching**

Then mark squares on paper and learn to stitch to the points of the squares. When a point is reached, stop the machine with the needle *down* into the point, then lift the presser foot and turn the goods, using the needle as a pivot. Drop the foot and continue with the stitching. All points are stitched in this manner.

**Guiding the goods**

Learn to stitch seams together, first using plain materials with no lines and guiding the stitching with the eye. Watch the distance between the cut edge and the edge of the presser foot and not the needle. Do not try to sew fast. You can hold the goods at the back to guide it straight, but do not draw it backward. The machine must feed the goods.

**Stopping****Stitching curves**

The larger part of the material should be held to the left of the needle with the seam under the arm of the machine. There are few exceptions to this rule. Always stop the needle with the take-up thread bar raised high on the machine. If this bar is down, even if the needle is raised, the needle will be unthreaded when the bar lifts. If this bar is watched, it will not be necessary to draw out and waste yards of surplus thread when sewing. These long threads are inconvenient and unnecessary.

Practice machine-stitching the inner edges of curves cut from material. Necklines and armholes are stretched easily when tried on before the sleeves and the neck are finished. Therefore, the raw edge of loosely woven mate-

rial should be machine-stitched even if the goods is heavy; coarse, unbleached muslin or loosely woven wool will stretch as badly as voile under these conditions.

A *stretched curve* can be drawn back to shape with stitching, as is often necessary when a neck or armhole has been stretched. Place the stretched curve on the machine and start to stitch at the end of the curve. Follow a line with the eye along the straight thread of material from the needle outward. Hold the left hand firmly on this place about six inches from the needle, then follow a straight thread of the goods from the finger to the right. This will make a right angle (see illustration). With the fingers, draw the material straight along these lines and start to stitch around the curve. Stitch for two or three inches, keeping the straight threads at right angles. Then shift the fingers and stitch another few inches. Allow the material to ease back into its natural position as it stitches—which it will do without any assistance. When the circle is completed, it will lie flat and will not be ripped around the stretched curve.

When finished edges do not meet at the end of the seam, the seam should be ripped and each seam should be tested by stitching it in the manner described in the preceding paragraph. One side may have been stretched when basted, and this can easily be determined if the bias edge is stitched.

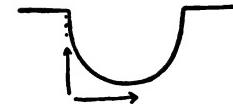
To test, pin or hold the goods on a flat surface at a right angle, smoothing the goods along its lengthwise and cross-wise threads to make this right angle. If the bias edge has been stretched, it will ripple; it should then be opened and rebasted.

When two bias edges are to be finished separately and must meet (as an opening on a bias yoke), test them for meeting when they are basted rather than wait until they are stitched. If a bias edge is stretched, it will always twist. It must be opened and straightened. It may be necessary to machine-stitch the edge.

Practice continuous stitching for speed in construction. As one seam is finished, have another ready to start under the needle. After the second seam has been stitched for one or two inches, reach back and cut the seams apart. This will save much time and possibly rethreading the needle.

As the fingers hold the seam in machine-stitching, keep them well removed from the needle. When stitching

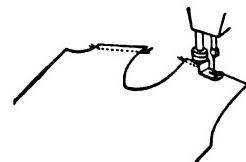
Easing a stretched curve



Straightening a stretched bias

Testing

Speed in stitching seams

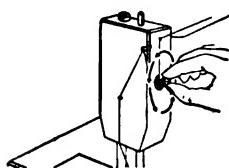


## SEWING-MACHINE OPERATIONS

rapidly, the fingers may be drawn too close to the needle. Amateurs should stitch slowly to avoid difficulties.

**Tension adjustments**

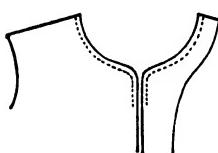
If the machine does not stitch correctly, some poor adjustment of the tensions is indicated. There is a tension for the upper thread and one for the bobbin. The stitch should sink into the goods halfway on each side. If one thread seems to be on top of the goods, then the other thread is too loose and its tension should be tightened. A book of directions for tensions should accompany every sewing machine; if your machine has none, turn the screw on the top or the screw on the bobbin case either to the right to tighten or to the left to loosen the tension. A partial turn of the screw is usually all that is necessary. Try the stitch on a sample of cloth until the right stitch is secured. Even drop stitches are sometimes caused by loose tensions if not by a short needle.

**Loosening the tension****The long stitch**

The use of the upper tension on the sewing machine can be of a great aid in sewing. The lower tension is automatic and seldom requires adjusting. The top tension, however, may be loosened for all basting and gathering on the machine.

If the tension is on the front of the machine, set the right hand with the *palm upward*, grasp the screw, and turn it to the left until the back of the hand is up. This will be about one-half turn of the tension. When finished, place the hand on the screw with the *back of the hand* upward (the same position as when the screw was released) and make one-half turn back to tighten it to its original position.

A longer stitch is sometimes useful when gathering or basting on the machine. Every machine has a stitch adjustment—either a screw or a lever. Gathered threads are easier to draw up if the stitch is long, and basting is always advised with a long stitch. The length of the stitch can be judged by a sample made from the material.

**Stitching stay edges**

The sewing machine can be of great assistance in preparing the cut edges for easy assembly. Machine-stitch around the cut edges of all intricate joinings, such as curved sections, yoke edges, bias-cut edges, angular sections. Stitch near the sewing line but a little nearer to the edge of the material, so that the stitching will be covered and will remain inside the garment when it is finished. This extra stitching also strengthens the seam. Permit the machine to stitch naturally; do not push or draw the goods. If the

stitching follows the natural position of the material, the material will not be stretched in the process.

Angular sections, when stay-stitched, are easy to assemble. Curved pockets will be curved and not pointed. Pointed edges will be pointed instead of curved. Stretchy material will meet at the seams. In fact, the stay-stitching saves many struggles in assembly.

Machine stitches can be used for fastening threads at the end of seams. When the exact ending is reached, hold back the material and prevent its feeding normally under the machine needle. This will place several machine stitches at the end. The threads may then be clipped off close to the seam, and no tying of threads will be necessary.

After the seam has been basted and is ready to be stitched, only a few moments will be required to straighten all of the sewing lines and perfect them for straight-stitching.

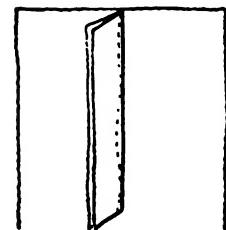
Press each seam over to one side (do not open), and press a crease on one side of all seams that are not curved. Hip seams are straight from the hips downward but are curved from the hips to the waist. Draw the curve over the end of the board as it is being pressed. Lift the pressed seams, and the crease will be the line to follow in preference to the basting. Stitch on the crease, and the line will be true and accurate. This pressing not only perfects the seam but gives an encouraging appearance to the dress. It is more interesting to sew when what you are sewing *looks right*.

The sewing machine should be given a "drink" of oil quite often. Many abused sewing machines are blamed for poor running when it is the operators who have neglected them and allowed them to become gummed. If the machine runs hard, oil it well with kerosene and run it until it runs freely. Then oil it with a good grade of sewing-machine oil, and not a household utility oil which is too heavy.

**Stitching curved edges**



**Straightening the basted line by pressing**



**Frequent oiling**

## QUESTIONS

1. How is the thread brought up from the bobbin case?
2. Where should the thread then be placed?
3. What will this prevent?
4. How is the treadle machine operated?
5. How can one practice stitching straight?
6. Should the goods be pulled at the back?
7. How can stitching curves be practiced?

8. How are curves stitched?
9. How is the width of the seam gauged?
10. How is the material held at the sewing machine?
11. What is the position of the thread and needle when stopping?
12. How can a stretched edge be eased to its original shape?
13. How are several seams stitched quickly?
14. What often causes a drop stitch?
15. Should the tension on the machine be used to aid sewing?
16. What tension should be adjusted and which should not be touched?
17. How much is the tension turned to loosen?
18. When is a tension turned to loosen?
19. When is a loose tension used?
20. When is a longer stitch used?
21. How are cut edges prepared with the sewing machine?
22. What edges are stayed with machine-stitching?
23. When basting on the machine, what kind of stitch is used?
24. How is the tension adjusted?
25. What kind of thread is used on the bobbin?
26. How are short sections gathered on the machine?
27. On which side of the material is the stitching made?
28. Which thread is drawn up?
29. How may machine stitches be used for fastening threads at the ends of seams?
30. When is a machine oiled?
31. How is an oiled machine cleaned?

## CHAPTER 3

### Patterns

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#### MATERIAL TERMS

The terms for materials in reference to the use of paper patterns are *selvage*, *lengthwise thread*, *crosswise thread*, *bias*, and *fold*.

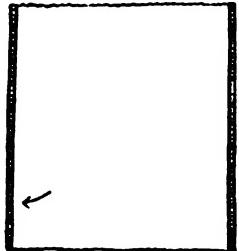
The *selvage* of the goods is the finished edge down the length of the material. It is usually of a different weave than that of the material itself, especially in novelty weaves and wool. The selvage threads are often woven closer together even in silk; selvage on wool is often made with cotton threads, which makes it shrink differently from the woolen goods. This makes it advisable always to remove the selvage from wool. It is not necessary to remove it from silk, cotton, or linen.

**Selvage at the edge**

It is important to recognize the *lengthwise thread* of material. The lengthwise thread is indicated on all patterns by markings or printing, which shows how the pattern is to be placed on the material. The pattern should be placed exactly as the mark indicates.

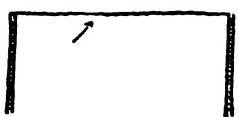
**The lengthwise thread**

The lengthwise thread runs parallel with the selvage on all parts of the cloth; even if the selvage is removed, it still exists. A recognition of this thread is important, as many confuse the term "straight of material" or "straight piece of goods" with the true "lengthwise." When a section is cut square, all four sides are "straight," but two of the sides will be on the crosswise and two on the lengthwise.



The *crosswise* thread runs across the material along a torn edge and forms, also, a "straight" line. This line, however, should not be used for a lengthwise line when placing the pattern, for the crosswise thread has an elasticity that often causes the material to twist and thus to form an ungraceful line when on the figure.

**The crosswise thread**



**Cutting lengthwise**

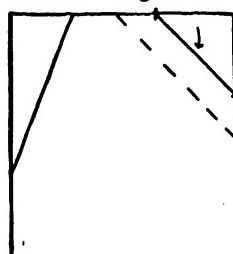
Unless otherwise designated, cut all center fronts and backs, both of the waist and skirt, on the lengthwise thread of the goods. The lengthwise threads hang in more graceful lines than do the crosswise, which makes it necessary to cut material with the lengthwise thread running down the center of sleeves, skirts, and drapes. Belts should always be cut on the lengthwise thread.

**Cutting crosswise**

Material should be cut usually so that gathers may be placed along the crosswise thread. The folds of gathers drop more gracefully along the lengthwise than along the crosswise thread.

**Determining the lengthwise thread**

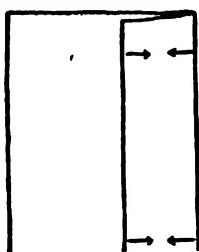
It is often difficult to determine the correct lengthwise thread after the selvage has been removed, especially on an odd-shaped piece of material. To determine this thread, fold the goods into a few pleats in the hands, first across one straight edge and then the other, noting which result is the more graceful. One set of pleats will be stiff and wiry, but the other will fall in graceful lines. The latter will be found to have the lengthwise threads running down the pleats. Mark this line with chalk for future reference when cutting.

**Bias on diagonal****Cutting bias**

The *bias* of the material is the diagonal section that runs either to the right or the left. A *true bias* is the diagonal of a perfect square, such as a folded handkerchief, folded from point to point. All other bias is termed *near bias* or *long bias*. These latter terms, however, are seldom used.

When *bias* is indicated, it should always be cut on the *true bias* even though several short strips must be sewed together. Making bias strips is easy when the right method is used.

To cut a bias from an uneven section of material, draw a chalk line along the straight threads, both lengthwise and crosswise, and mark four or more inches on each line from the point of the angle. Now join these marks with a straight chalk line, and you will have a true bias. Mark to the right or left of this line for the bias strips.

**Fold of material**

The *fold* designates a folded line of a double fold of material as it will be folded in reference to the pattern and not as it is folded on the bolt in the store. For example, the back of the waist is usually made the same on both its right and left sides; therefore, the pattern of the back is usually made in a half pattern and the goods must be cut double. In the pattern layout, this half section is shown indicated to be cut on a fold of the material; it is important to

place your pattern piece as shown in the layout, so that the cut fabric will be twice the size of the pattern section.

## THE FIRST DRESS

The first dress should be made of a firmly woven material of a small print. Such material will not stretch and is easily pressed. If silk is chosen, it should be of a sturdy weave, as many seams may have to be ripped—unless samples are made of each problem.

Figured material may be used to advantage, as mistakes are not so apparent in printed goods as in plain. You may make many mistakes in your first dress. It is not necessary to make mistakes, however, if you have mastered a number of sewing problems before you begin the dress.

Thin or loosely woven material and large floral or plain and striped patterns should be avoided by the beginner. Velvets and satins should not be attempted until one is able to sew other materials perfectly. Soft wool is not difficult to work with if the pressing lines are followed, but wool must be tailored perfectly to secure the best results.

Gingham offers encouragement to the beginner. It is reversible, which is an advantage as there is no right or wrong side. It is firmly woven and retains a crease. It has no up or down, and the pattern can be turned without miscutting. It is easy to cut and does not slip. It should be selected in a small print and not in a stripe.

Materials that are reversible are often easier to use than are those having an up-and-down and a wrong side. Such materials can be turned and thus utilized to better advantage.

Fabrics should be carefully examined before being cut. Remnants often have flaws which can be marked with a pin and thus avoided in the cutting. Study the material to determine if it has a right and wrong side; an up-and-down; nap or pile; a large floral pattern, wide stripes or plaids. These factors all must be taken into consideration when cutting and making.

**Loose weaves**

**Gingham**

**Reversibles**

**Examining the fabric**

The amateur's first error is often in choosing a commercial dress pattern of complicated design or of the wrong size. Count the number of pieces. The fewer the pieces,

**First error**

## PATTERN SIZES

the fewer the seams to be made. Avoid bias and angular lines. Choose for your first pattern one without pleats, yokes, collars, and insets. A plain front and back, or possibly a flare at the front and a plain back. If the pattern has a collar, finish the neck without the collar for the first dress. Collars are often difficult to apply. Neat work and attractive material, with good fitting, will make an attractive garment even if the lines are simple.

#### Pattern sizes

Patterns are manufactured in various sizes for adult figures, one group being made according to bust size: 34, 36, 38, 40, 42, 44, and so on; and another group according to age, namely size 14, 16, 18, and 20. There is a slight difference between these two types of patterns, but if individual fitting rules are understood, selections may be made from both.

#### Comparison of sizes

A 34 bust pattern is the same bust size as is an age 16 pattern; a 36 bust pattern is the same bust size as is an age 18 pattern; and a 38 bust pattern is the same bust size as is an age 20 pattern. A matured woman may be flattered to consider that she can wear a sixteen-year-old size, though in reality it is the same pattern as a 34 bust. The difference is so small that, when each pattern is fitted to the individual, it could never be noticed.

#### Added ease

It is quite a revelation to a woman to find that her favorite dress measures forty inches or more at the bust when it was made from a 36 pattern. Patterns add ease to the *brassière* size which is actually given on the pattern. A garment with sleeves must have ease at the underarm for movement, and the more active the service in which the dress will be used, the more ease is designed in the garment. A house dress, therefore, will have more ease than a tailored dress; a daytime dress will have more ease than a formal dress; and a coat will have more ease than any other type of garment.

#### Measuring a dress

To measure a dress as a test, fold it down the center front and center back and pin. Place it flat on the table and measure across the bustline at two inches under the sleeve, from center front to center back; you will be amazed at the breadth of material required to make a wearable dress.

#### Women's patterns

*Women's* patterns are made for matured figures. They are made with more dart, for the more erect figure, and also with a trifle larger sleeve and armholes than are misses' patterns. The waistline, too, is usually longer.

Women's patterns usually are listed from a possible 34 bust up to 52. Some women's and misses' patterns are listed up to 44 but seldom above size 38 or 40. A greater selection of patterns can be found in the 34-36-38 bust range—which are quite similar to the 16-18-20 age range—than in the smaller or larger sizes.

*Misses* patterns are made with less dart, for the less erect figure, and are shorter waisted. Also, they have smaller sleeves and armholes.

Some patterns are made for the short figure, which means that the pattern is short from neck to waist and from waist to hem and that the sleeves are shorter than the average.

Select the pattern best suited to your taste and the material to be used, and then fit it to your individual measurements.

#### Misses' patterns

## SELECTING PATTERNS

Choosing the right pattern requires much thought. The pattern must not only be suitable to the material but it must also be suitable to the individual who is to wear the finished garment.

The woman with a large figure requires special slenderizing designs. Garments designed for her slender sister may be most unbecoming if worn in the larger size. Fabric also has a great influence on the optical illusion created by dark and light materials. Dark material, either plain or figured, creates a slenderizing effect; but light material, and especially white, enlarges the appearance. It is the final effect for which one is working and not the beauty of the finished garment. The question, therefore, should not be, "Is the finished dress attractive?" but rather, "Will *I* be attractive in the dress when I wear it?"

Most women wish to appear like the "picture"—a model figure. Women flock to fashion shows to see the *model figures* display the gowns that they later will make or buy, in the hope that they, too, will make the same appearance. But—all styles suitable to a "perfect" 36 figure may not be becoming to your figure. Are you aware of any peculiarities of your figure that should be minimized? Are your hips extra large? Are you quite short and stout? Are your arms large for your body? Have you a large abdomen? Are you very tall and thin? Are your shoulders stooped?

#### Choosing patterns intelligently

#### Model figures

## PATTERNS

Is your figure angular? Each figure should thus be analyzed to check the selection of patterns so as to choose becoming styles—styles that will enhance the attractiveness of the wearer and not merely advertise the pattern of the dress.

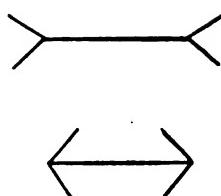
### Visualizing

Many women cannot visualize themselves in a new dress before it is made. This is an art that every home sewer should study, for without proper selection, the dress will not be satisfactory even though the sewing is a work of art.

You have a dress, or possibly several dresses, that you or your family and friends especially like. Study the lines; discover their secret. And *do not ignore the advice of your friends*. We can never “see ourselves as others see us.” This is a tragedy for many women. If they could see themselves as others see them, they would often not select the clothes they wear.

Stand in front of a long mirror; view yourself from all sides, especially from the sides. Use a hand mirror. Stand at a distance, not close to the glass, and notice how much smaller you appear in a dark dress than in a light dress. Drape a cloth around your shoulders and notice how much larger your figure appears. Try different effects with light and dark cloth for fronts, with various trimmings for collars and drapes, until you find out what is best suited to your figure before you select a pattern. If you learn to study your figure, you will soon be eager to make your own clothes, for they will be so much more attractive and becoming than before you learned this lesson.

### Optical illusions



The lines of dress designs produce optical illusions that either make the dress becoming or unbecoming to the wearer. The garment may be beautiful on a model figure, but when worn by one who is out of proportion, the illusion of the lines produces effects that are not pleasing and that often are actually unbecoming.

Notice the lines to the left. Both center lines are the same length and both have lines added that are also of the same length. Note the different effects. The line with the long straight lines added in a lengthening design makes the center line appear much longer than the line with short lines placed inward. One appears long and slender, while the other appears short and thick.

Dress lines produce the same effects. Lines in the dress made by seams running perpendicular to the floor will

produce a slenderizing effect; but large, round, floral designs in materials; circular effects in capes; large, loose sleeves; crosswise lines in the design; or any lines that attract the eye from the length of the figure will broaden it to the same degree. Crosswise lines shorten the figure, while an unbroken line lengthens the figure.

A few suggestions are offered for those who desire to choose patterns wisely:

A normal size figure has a wider choice than one that is out of proportion or one that is very small or very large.

If you are large, do not select a pattern unless it has slenderizing lines in vertical sections. The front should not be made in one plain piece; it will be more slenderizing if the pattern is designed with long collar lines in the front, or a deep yoke section possibly edged with a fold or collar. The deep, graceful folds of a cowl neck or a vest effect are also becoming and afford a variation from the standard surplus lines so often used.

Sleeves for a large woman should reach below the elbow, and if they are full, they should be made of soft clinging material. Large cape effects, so often chosen by the large woman because they present no sleeve problem, may be comfortable but they enlarge the figure to a marked degree. Look in the mirror at the width of the shoulders when wearing one of the cape-sleeve dresses and be convinced.

If the hips are large, seek to slenderize them not only by selecting vertical lines in the design but also by making the waist a trifle loose and full through the addition of puffed sleeves or drop shoulders. These widen the effect of the body so that the width of the hips will not be so much greater than the width of the shoulders. Straight side seams are also important with fullness at the front of the skirt.

The woman whose bust is larger than her hips should be especially cautious in selecting patterns. The front of her waist should be as plain as possible, with vertical lines in the designs or in soft folds over the bust. The V-neck should be used by the larger woman, as the higher necks have a tendency to broaden the chestlines and enlarge the figure.

The woman with a tall, angular figure should seek to broaden the effect of her clothes. Her dresses may fit as perfectly as those of her larger sister, but the lines about her

#### Suggestions for large figures

#### The figure with large hips

#### The top-heavy figure

#### The angular figure

neck and shoulders should be full and soft. Even the fronts of her dresses should be made in softer lines, with long, soft collar effects. This type of figure can also wear tiered skirts, peplums, big sashes and bows at the waist; but it should avoid skirts with long, tight lines that only emphasize its thinness.

#### The short figure

The very short woman, especially if she is of the matronly type, should avoid all belt lines in the front of the dress. She should select the unbroken length of line from the top of the dress to the hem, especially in front. The belt may be placed across the back, but should end at the sides. Many patterns in which the skirt extends up into the waist could be made beltless by joining waist and skirt pattern when cutting. These would be very becoming for the short, stout woman.

#### The stout figure

The stout woman should avoid the appearance of being too large for her clothes. Youthful styles should be left for youthful figures. Many becoming styles that will not make her figure conspicuous may be selected by the stout woman. Long fronts and necklines, lack of fullness in the skirt, good corseting, ease in fitting, all have a tendency to slenderize her figure. These should be chosen rather than a dress pattern of clever design that is attractive on the figure in the picture. Keep in mind this slogan, "*Will I look attractive in that dress?*"

#### The figure with a flat chest

The figure with a flat chest should select a dress with full lines across the chest. This can be accomplished by selecting patterns with closed collars with draped effects or bows at the neck- or the chestline. Tucks or shirring on the shoulder also fill the chestline. This type of figure should never wear a dress that is closely fitted through the chest with no trimming to relieve the flatness.

#### Questions to ask before buying a pattern

The following are some of the questions that you should answer before purchasing a pattern:

1. Is the skirt too short for your figure? Short skirts make the figure appear shorter and broader.
2. Is a defined waistline becoming? A belt draws the eye to the width of the body and also shortens the short figure.
3. Can you wear the natural (or lower) waistline? The natural waistline emphasizes the prominence of the sway back and any indication of a prominence of the abdomen.

4. Can you wear full sleeves, elbow-length sleeves? The elbow strikes the body at the waistline. Fullness at the waistline will make it appear larger if short, full sleeves are worn.

5. Can you wear stripes? Wide stripes attract attention to a large figure.

6. Has the dress a large collar? Large collars make the shoulders and arms appear larger and the figure broader.

7. Can you wear a division line in the skirt, as in overskirts, peplums, ruffles, or tiers? Horizontal lines have a tendency to shorten the figure.

8. If you are flat-chested, have you selected a dress with fullness through the front? The chest should be filled out to a normal proportion.

9. Can you wear a round neck? Round effects near the face make the face look fuller.

10. Can you wear a collar at the back? Any collar effect in the back shortens the neck.

11. Is the skirt long and tight? Long tight skirts cannot be worn by women with full thighs. The skirt will burst in the seams.

12. Is the dress sleeveless? Can you wear sleeveless dresses? Large arms are not attractive in sleeveless dresses; the flat upper part of the arm should be covered.

13. If the abdomen is large, have you selected a dress with looseness at the waist so that it will drop in folds when you are seated? Soft long collars, surplus effects, gathers at the waistline give this needed softness across the abdomen.

14. If the neck is long, have you selected a dress with a collar? A long neck will be shortened by the use of high or closed collar effects.

## HOW PATTERNS ARE CUT

Dress patterns are made to fill the needs of women who desire to make dresses that have been previously designed and who need patterns of each dress section for cutting, together with instructions as to the assembling of the sections into garments.

Marks for joining the various sections of a pattern are often made in symbols, each pattern manufacturer using a different type of symbol; in addition, some patterns use

Dress patterns

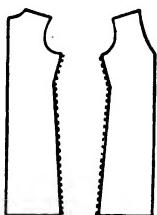
Pattern symbols

## PATTERNS

printed words for the instructions. Many of the patterns indicate the joining of the sections with notches, either cut in the paper or printed.

**Seam allowance**

The seam allowances on the different makes of patterns also differ, which makes it quite necessary to understand the pattern before cutting. If you *assume* that a certain width seam is allowed on a particular pattern, and a wider seam is used, then the dress, sewed according to the narrower seams, will be too large, which will not be the fault of the pattern. Wide seam allowances account for some patterns "running large." For this reason, together with many others, it is advisable to actually *mark the sewing line* on the material so that the dress will be made uniform as to size.

**Wider seams****Lengthwise thread**

The majority of patterns allow a three-eighths to half-inch seam allowance. If you are not sure that the pattern is a perfect fit for you, however, or if your material is of a type that frays easily, it may be wise for you to cut a wider seam than the pattern allows; but be sure to mark the sewing line.

Some patterns have wider seams than others. If your pattern does not provide an extra wide seam, it will be advisable to cut well beyond the edge of the pattern, especially on the side seams. But be sure to keep in mind that the basting for the first try-on should be made along the sewing line indicated by the make of pattern you are using..

Side seams should also be made wider so that they may be "let out" when fitting. This will be explained in the lessons on fitting. Finished seams are pressed open, and it is almost impossible to press open a small seam. The wider seam can be handled to better advantage and trimmed off later if you desire, or it may be needed in a seam finish.

All patterns, whether printed or marked by symbols, indicate the *lengthwise thread of the material*. This indication on each section of the pattern shows just how the pattern is to be laid onto the goods.

The importance of this symbol is often minimized, and some section of the pattern is twisted into a convenient corner to save material. The whole dress may be ruined through such ignorance. Many "home-made" effects can be traced to poor cutting. The dress will not hang gracefully if it is cut wrong, and the mistake will be quickly noticed, not only by those who know how to sew but by others who can see that the dress "does not look right."

## USE OF PATTERNS

Most patterns include a chart showing how to place the pattern on the goods. Some manufacturers give a layout for each size as it should be laid on materials of various widths with and without a distinct up and down. When a pattern offers such a complete cutting service, it is not wise to buy less material than the pattern envelope specifies—unless you are very much shorter than the average for your size. If a pattern provides only a sample layout, showing only one size laid on material with a distinct up and down, you may be able to use less than the amount of fabric specified, provided the fabric has no up and down. However, it is never wise—particularly for the inexperienced sewer—to risk running short of material.

Layout

Darts are often found in the pattern in the front of the waist, either at the underarm seams or at the shoulder. The back of the skirt may have darts at the waist, and the sleeve may have darts at the elbow. Darts are also used for trimming, such as to draw up fullness in the sleeve cap of a puff sleeve. Darts should be marked carefully and followed as indicated.

Darts

Darts are important and are indicated in symbols or with printed lines that converge to form a point. These indicate the width of material that must be taken up in a V-shaped section to *raise* the goods at the seam to fit the curve of the figure. If darts are indicated in the pattern, it is necessary to make them in the dress. Do not attempt to stretch out the goods and cut off the dart. The effect will not be correct.

The lines of the folds of pleats are also indicated in the pattern. It will be advisable to mark the folds of the pleats along the lines or symbols given. A simple and quick method is given in the lesson on pleats.

Pleats

A perfectly made pleated skirt is a work of art. Do not put the pleats in by "guess"; the finished garment will surely advertise the fact.

Since the iron will be used continually while sewing, press the pattern sections before laying them onto the goods. The few moments of time spent will be well repaid in the ease and perfection with which you can work with the pattern pressed flat.

Pressing the pattern

**Matching the sections**

You will find it much easier to make the garment if you assemble all the sections of the pattern and study them before you attempt to cut the dress. Match all the front sections and all the back sections of both the waist and skirt; then match any sleeve sections. If the sleeve is of an intricate cut, fold it together; pleat it up and pin on the cuff or any insets, so that you may understand it fully. If the pattern is not thoroughly understood, the garment might be miscut.

**Laying aside unused sections**

Many patterns offer more than one style of sleeves, front, or trimming, some of which will not be used. Lay these sections aside and also any sections that will be used for different material for trimming. Fold up all the unnecessary sections and place them in the envelope so as not to confuse them with the used sections.

**Checking the pattern for fitting**

All patterns should be checked for fitting before they are cut. Patterns are made to fit the standard figure, and if the individual figure does not conform to standard measurements, it will be necessary to alter the pattern. If any of your measurements are larger than those of the pattern, allowance must be made when cutting. Rules for fitting will be found in the section on fitting.

**Examining the goods**

Examine the goods before cutting. Determine if it has any flaws. If there is a flaw, place a pin at this point and it can usually be avoided when cutting. Also determine if it has an up and down, or stripes that must be matched. All this must be planned when laying out the pattern.

**Preparing the material**

Wool material should be preshrunk and the selvage removed before you place the pattern. Cotton goods should also be shrunk, unless it is Sanforized. The crosswise edge must be straight on all materials to be cut folded double; tear off a strip to straighten if possible, or chalk-mark a line on wool. Pin the crosswise threads at the top and bottom, measuring from the lengthwise mark on the pattern section if the material is opened for cutting. The pattern must be placed correctly according to the "lengthwise" symbols.

**Material with stiff dressing**

Material such as prints may not fold double even if torn at the edge. If the goods does not lie flat when doubled after the edge has been torn, stretch it diagonally to straighten the edges.

**Trial layout**

Take time to lay out the pattern in a trial layout. Place

all the sections loosely on the goods so as to test the amount of material. Do not pin the pattern down for the trial layout. Roll up the goods as the material is covered with the pattern.

It is not advisable to cut thoughtlessly. Never cut one piece of a pattern until all of it has been laid out, or at least tried out. If you cut too quickly, you may find that the material you have left is too short or too small for some important section. When large sections of the material remain, it is usually evident that the pattern might have been shifted and cut to better advantage or the pattern might have been adapted to the material, making a seamed yoke effect if necessary.

If two sections must be cut with only one pattern, such as two sleeves cut from different parts of the goods, it is advisable to cut the second pattern from newspaper to use on the trial layout. The same is true of double collars and cuffs or wide facings for revers. After the first sleeve is cut, the material will be turned over and the original pattern, with the first sleeve pinned to it, will be placed onto the second sleeve. Both sleeves will thus be pinned to the one pattern for cutting.

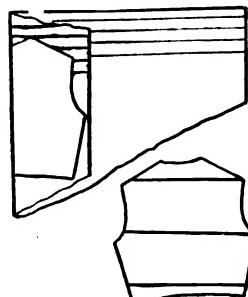
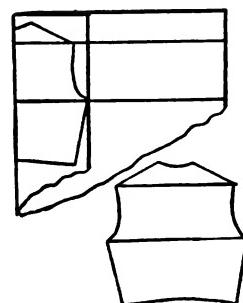
When cutting sections such as the back or front from a fold, with a half pattern, measure the width of the widest part of the pattern and then fold the material over to this width, measuring back from the selvage to the upper and lower end of the mark for the lengthwise of material. This will place the pattern with the lengthwise thread correctly on both sections.

It is also necessary to *match the straight crosswise thread* of the material when the goods is folded, or one side of the section will be cut correctly and the other side will be crooked. If the goods cannot be torn across the top, draw a thread or mark with chalk along the straight crosswise thread; then match the line when folding the goods double and pin across the top.

It is equally important to tear a straight edge or mark a straight crosswise thread before cutting double skirt sections. Disregard of matching crosswise threads often results in an unequal distribution of skirt fullness, one side having more fullness than the other.

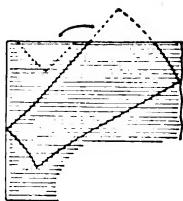
#### Placing all the pattern

#### Cutting double and cutting from a fold



## PATTERNS

### Piecing



### Belts

If you find that your goods is running short, it is often possible to piece several of the facings and even an inconspicuous corner of the underarm or the sleeve if necessary. If material is to be pieced, be sure to match the lengthwise threads of the goods; match the edge perfectly, often with right-side basting, and then press the seam open and recut the material to match the pattern. "Guessing" at sewing never produces perfect work.

### Cutting surface

A belt should be cut on the length of the material, and its cutting should be planned when the other sections of the garment are laid out. If the cutting of the belt is left for the last, it is usually necessary either to piece it or to cut it on the crosswise of the material. The latter will produce a twisted belt and a belt that will stretch. Piecing is preferable. Make all belt piecing seams at the underarm seams of the dress, and cut the pieces along straight threads of the material, never on the bias.

### Layout

Two or three card tables make an excellent cutting surface. The edges are straight, the corners are square, and the material can be caught to the table top if so desired. Then, too, one can sit while cutting. A chair at the end of a table will hold the bulk of the material and thus prevent it from sliding to the floor. If a large cutting surface is not available, lay out the material on the floor.

Place all the sections of the pattern according to the layout, if the pattern has not been altered and all the pattern is to be used. If the pattern sections have been changed so that they can be cut to better advantage, lay out the pattern as economically as possible.

Do not pin down the pattern until the best arrangement has been found. If large sections of the goods are wasted, and all the pattern has not been placed, do not become alarmed, as it possibly can be rearranged to better advantage. When assured that there is sufficient material, pin the pattern to place, measuring the lengthwise thread mark, and cut the garment.

## SECRETS OF FITTING PATTERNS

Fit patterns from the waistline *upward*.

Fit the waist pattern line first.

Lift the dress to the pit of the arm.

Keep the shoulder seam resting on top of the shoulder.

Pin out bulges between in folds.

If not sufficiently long, slash and spread.

Lengthen the waistline in front.

**Lengthening**

Lengthen the waistline in back if necessary.

Lengthen the sleeve *above* the elbow.

Enlarge the sleeve in thirds.

**Enlarging sleeves**

One-third of the extra allowance in center.

One-third on each side seam.

This procedure enables the shape of the sleeve cap to be retained.

Waistlines are usually enlarged in front.

**Waistlines**

Add one-half the necessary amount to each side seam of the waist and of the skirt.

Measure a circular waist on the *inside* of the curve.

If a circular waist is too large, cut a wider seam allowance and take up less seam.

If a circular waist seems too small, measure the inside of the curve before clipping it larger.

Do not slash a pattern to enlarge the hips.

**Hips**

Do not lay the pattern off the center front.

Make all allowance on the side seams.

Add one-fourth the necessary amount to each of the four side seams. Pin paper to the hipline.

## QUESTIONS

### Material Terms

1. What are the five material terms in reference to patterns?
2. What is the selvage?
3. Why does selvage differ from the material?
4. Why is it removed from woolen material?
5. What is the lengthwise thread, and what is its importance?
6. What is the crosswise thread?
7. Why does the crosswise differ from the lengthwise?
8. Why should the crosswise and lengthwise not be confused?
9. What sections are cut on the lengthwise, and why?
10. Along what thread are gathers placed?
11. How is the lengthwise thread determined after the selvage is removed?
12. What is the bias?
13. What are the two kinds of bias?
14. What kind of bias should be used?
15. How is a true bias found?
16. What is a fold?

**PATTERNS**

17. What kind of a pattern should be selected?
18. What kind of material should be selected?
19. What should the beginner avoid in materials?
20. What is the best material for beginners?
21. Why does it offer advantages over other materials?
22. Why are reversible materials easy to use?
23. Should material be examined before cutting?

**Pattern Sizes**

1. What kind of a dress pattern should the amateur choose?
2. How are women's patterns designated?
3. What is the difference between women's and misses' patterns?
4. How large are women's patterns made?
5. How large are misses' patterns made?
6. How are shorter patterns made?
7. What is the important decision in choosing patterns?
8. Are all styles suitable for every figure?
9. Should the advice of others be ignored?
10. How should the figure be viewed?

**How Patterns Are Cut**

1. Are there optical illusions in patterns?
2. What lines produce a slenderizing effect?
3. What lines broaden the figure? Lengthen it? Shorten it?
4. What are the choices for the large woman? For the heavy figure? For the short figure? For the flat chest?
5. What 14 questions should be answered before selecting the pattern?
6. What are the various pattern symbols?
7. What are seam widths on patterns?
8. Why do some patterns "run large"?
9. What general seam width is given? Is it sufficiently wide at all times?
10. Give three reasons for cutting wider seams?
11. How are patterns marked as to the thread for the layout?

**Use of Patterns**

1. What is the layout chart?
2. For what materials are they planned?
3. Why do they sometimes seem to require too much goods?
4. When are darts found? Why are they used?
5. How are pleats indicated?
6. Where should the pattern be laid out?
7. Why should the pattern be studied first?
8. What pieces should be folded away?
9. How should the pattern be checked for fitting?
10. Should the goods be examined?

11. How should the crosswise edge be straightened?
12. How is the pattern checked to match the lengthwise perfectly?
13. What is done with stiff material that does not fold even?
14. Should the first piece of pattern that comes to hand be cut?
15. How is the cutting of the pattern accomplished?
16. Why should time be taken for cutting?
17. How should the sleeves be cut? How should the second sleeve be cut from the original pattern?
18. How is a fold measured for cutting?
19. Should facings be pieced? If they should, what should be done to the seams?
20. When should the belt be cut, and how?
21. When is the layout not followed?
22. How is the pattern arranged without the layout?
23. Where is the bulk of the goods placed in relation to the table when cutting?

## CHAPTER 4

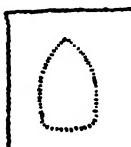
### Shrinking and Pressing

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#### Shrinking cotton

All wash fabrics should be shrunk before they are made, unless they are Sanforized. The dress can then be made to fit as closely as desired without allowing for shrinkage. Place the folded material in cold water and allow it to remain until thoroughly wet. Wring out and hang up to dry. Press before it is completely dry. Be sure that the edges are pressed straight and the material is folded evenly. Tear the top edge to secure a straight thread.

#### Testing wool for shrinking



#### Shrinking wool

The better quality of wool is preshrunk and can be made without further shrinking. To test wool to determine if it has been preshrunk, place a corner of the material on the pressboard, cover it with a wet cloth, and place the iron on the wet cloth several inches from the edge. Steam it well but do not press it too dry. Lift the iron and look at the spot. If the iron has left an imprint with a ruffled edge around it, then the material has shrunk where the iron was placed and the material has drawn up. This goods must be shrunk, as all the seams of the finished garment must be pressed with much moisture. If the wool is not preshrunk, the seams will pucker.

Woolen material is usually fifty-four inches wide and is shrunk and pressed as it comes folded from the bolt. Remove all the selvage.

Wring a sheet out of warm water, folding it double the full length. Place the wet sheet on the table. Place the folded wool on the sheet and roll the wool and sheet together the full length. Lay away for several hours or overnight. Then remove the sheet and press the wool on the wrong side as it lays double, without a cloth. Press first one side and then turn to the other side of the fold, always pressing on the *wrong side* of the goods. Do not press a

crease on the fold; press up to it but not over the folded edge. Do not press dry, but allow it to dry thoroughly after it is pressed. It can be hung over an open door or suspended over a broomstick.

Wool should never be pressed dry, but moisture *must* be used. If the iron is not too hot, it is not necessary to use a cloth for pressing dampened wool, but a wet cloth is usually used in pressing when sewing. Seams of wool can be pressed open by wetting the fingertips and running the wet fingers down the seam. The tip of the iron can easily follow the seam.

*Never press wool dry.* Remove the iron while the goods is still steaming. Notice the tailor's pressing machines in the window; this point will be demonstrated. If the wool is accidentally pressed until it is slick, place a wet cloth over this spot and repress, lifting the iron and cloth while the goods is still steaming. The steam will remove the hard surface and the shiny appearance.

Fullness can easily be pressed out of wool, such as at the top of the sleeve cap of a mannish coat. The tailor presses this sleeve until it cups over the top of the shoulder with no gathers. To do this he first places two rows of gathers around the curve and then presses it over a curved surface (or the end of the pressboard), using a wet cloth. He repeats this operation until all of the fullness has disappeared.

The pucker at the end of darts in wool can also be completely removed with pressing. The dart, of course, must be made correctly before it is pressed, but pressing will perfect the end of the dart and make it practically invisible. Press with the points of the dart on the end of the pressboard or tailor's cushion. Place a wet cloth over the dart and press it flat.

Silk should not be shrunk or dipped in water before making. It is manufactured with a dressing which should not be removed. Many silk dresses look "home made" because they are improperly pressed. It is as important to press a silk dress during the process of construction as it is to press a wool coat. The dress will be much more professionally made if it is pressed during construction. The factory operator or the expert sewer may be able to make a complete dress without pressing, but she is making hundreds of dresses of the same design and material and has become an expert in her work. The home sewer must be

#### Pressing wool

#### Pressing with steam

#### Pressing out fullness in wool



#### Pressing silk with moisture

## SHRINKING AND PRESSING

more cautious. She must exert every effort to make her work as perfect as possible. The iron certainly gives the aid needed. Silk edges should be clean-cut, and it requires moisture to make the edge keen. Silk pressed dry will spring back into its original position. It must be pressed flat to hold. But if moisture is used it must be used correctly. Otherwise the seams will have a laundered appearance or the material will be water spotted.

Place the seam to be pressed on the pressboard wrong side up. If the seam is to be opened, press it dry first; then place a closely woven *dry cloth* over the seam, lightly brush a wet cloth over the dry cloth, and press. Sufficient moisture will be absorbed into the dry cloth to enable you to press the seam flat. If the seam still does not have a finished appearance on the right side, repeat the operation.

### Pressing rayon

There are many kinds of rayon fabrics. Some of them wash beautifully and do not require shrinking. Some are very sensitive to heat and will stick to the iron if the iron is too hot. Others shrink greatly when wet but will stretch out to the original shape if ironed quite damp. If a garment is too small after washing, press it with a wet cloth and stretch the material as it is pressed, measuring to secure the correct size.

### Pressing satin

Satin should be pressed cautiously and should not be pressed until the seam is perfect. Satin retains the crease and it will be difficult to remove it; even basting stitches are easily pressed into satin.

### Pressing pleats with paper

Press lightly with no moisture and then remove the basting before the final pressing. Satin should be pressed from the right side after spreading a cheesecloth over it. If moisture is to be used for a clean-cut edge, use a heavy cloth over the satin and follow the direction for pressing silk.

When pressing pleats, especially on satin or thin wool, slide a folded paper under the right side of the pleat before pressing. The pleat will be indented into the right side of the goods unless the folded paper is used. Pleated hems should be pressed over a heavily padded board with the folded paper.

### Steaming velvet

All velvet weaves are steamed rather than pressed flat on a board. The professionals use needle boards, but they are too expensive for the home sewer and it is not always possible to use them.

Many of the velvet seams can be creased open with the

thumb nail. Press as little as possible. Seams that must be pressed are drawn over an inverted iron, held upside-down on the end of the sleeve board. Place a wet cloth on the hot iron and draw the wrong side of the velvet seam over the steaming iron. As this is difficult to do, it is advisable to press as the seams are made and while the garment is still open. The amateur should have a tailor or presser give the final pressing to a velvet garment.

**Thumb pressing**

When using the needle board, the velvet is spread face down and pressed with a damp cloth placed over it to remove creases. Transparent velvet, however, cannot be dampened or pressed on a needle board.

**The needle board**

Silk is often manufactured with sizing in it to hold it firm. Water will remove this sizing and will leave a spot, the sizing (which is a glutinous material) having run to the outer edge of the spot. After the spot is dry, rub the goods between the hands to remove the sizing from the edge of the spot. The spot will then disappear.

**Water spots**

When working with light material, the finger may be pricked with a pin or a needle and a small spot of blood may drop onto the dress. This spot can usually be removed in the following way.

**Removing blood spots**

Take two or three yards of white thread, chew them until they are wet and in a firm ball. Take the small ball of thread, run a pin through it and as the spot rests on a clean blotter, touch the spot, rubbing from the outer edge inward. The spot will usually disappear.

A clean drop of sewing-machine oil can be removed with blotters and the iron. Place one blotter under the spot and another blotter over it. Use a warm iron. Press the top blotter, gradually shifting the blotters until the spot disappears.

**Removing oil spots**

Soiled spots can usually be removed with a good cleaner. Use a scrap of the same goods as the garment for a rubbing cloth. Lighter or darker material often discolors the fabric. First rub a circle around the spot and then rub inward toward the spot.

**Using cleaner**

Spots made with oil can be removed with cleaning fluid; but when spots are made by a sweet fluid, water is needed to remove the sugar.

Press often and press well. Before the garment is assembled, finish each part of it by pressing. The finished effect is most encouraging and will shorten the process of construction.

**Good pressing**

**QUESTIONS**

1. Should wash fabrics be shrunk before they are made?
2. How should they be shrunk?
3. How is twisted material straightened at the edge?
4. How is wool tested to determine the necessity for shrinking?
5. Is the selvage removed from wool before shrinking?
6. How is wool shrunk?
7. How is it pressed? Is it pressed dry or wet?
8. If pressed slick, how can the nap be raised?
9. How can fullness be pressed out of wool?
10. How are ends of darts pressed?
11. Should silk be shrunk?
12. Should silk be pressed with moisture?
13. How is silk pressed? Is a wet cloth placed next to the silk?
14. How are rayon fabrics pressed?
15. How is satin pressed? Should the bastings be removed?
16. How are satin pleats pressed?
17. How is velvet pressed?
18. How can velvet be pressed with the fingers?
19. How can water spots be removed?
20. How can blood spots be removed?
21. How should soiled spots be cleaned? What is used to rub the material?

**PART II**

***Stitches; Cutting and Assembling***



## CHAPTER 5

### Stitches

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#### BEGINNERS' STITCHES

The enthusiastic beginner may be able to make a garment quickly if she masters a few necessary stitches before she starts the garment, but a study of sewing requires practice in making many stitches to cover all of the possible stitches used in garment making. Use soft cotton fabric for practice sewing. Dimity is attractive; it has a dressing which makes it easy to crease; it retains its shape, does not stretch or fray, and is easy to sew. Beginners' stitches might well be learned on a child's dress made of dimity. Watching the garment actually *grow* in the hands is a thrill long to be remembered.

Soft fabric

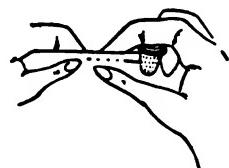
A seam is made with thread and needle, but unless the thread, needle, and seam are handled correctly, the stitches will be a staggering failure.

The amateur usually grasps the needle tightly between her fingers and stabs the needle back and forth into the seam, totally disregarding the use of a thimble. The results are usually a series of long crooked stitches wobbling aimlessly through the seam.

The thimble is not only a necessity for sewing correctly but is also a convenience. One can sew without a thimble and one can walk without shoes, but both the thimble and the shoes will speed the individual's purpose and the additional aid will produce more pleasing results.

The thimble is placed on the middle finger of the right hand (if the sewer is right-handed). It is used as a pusher for the needle and will protect the finger during the operation. If the seam is held correctly between the fingers, then the side of the thimble will be used.

Hand sewing

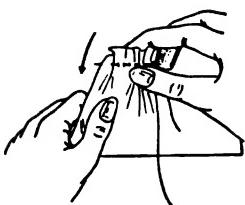


The thimble

## STITCHES

The seam is not pinned to a table-top, nor is it held down to the knee with the fist. The seam is held in front of the worker and is suspended in mid-air. The seam rests *between* the fingers.

### Holding the seam



Take only one stitch in the seam, then release the hold on the needle and place the forefinger back of the seam with the thumb in front. Grasp the seam in the left hand with the hands about one-half inch apart. Hold the seam taut between the hands. The tighter the seam is drawn, the smaller the stitches can be made.

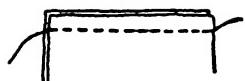
The needle is held *straight* and the left hand moves the seam *backward* and *forward* in front of the needle point. The right-hand fingers draw the stitches back onto the needle as the thimble pushes the needle through the seam. The needle is not wiggled, the *seam* is wiggled in front of the needle point. The stitches are pushed off the head of the needle. The needle is not removed until the seam is finished.

Some expert sewers produce a similar result by using a different method. They prefer to hold the seam steady and wiggle the needle, as they hold the seam between the fingers. But the stitches will be straighter and finer if the needle is held steady and the seam is wiggled in front of the needle.

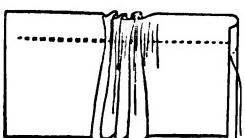
## NECESSARY STITCHES

It is necessary to learn only a few stitches to make a dress: the plain running stitch, the gathering stitch, the backstitch, plain basting and the dressmaker's basting stitch, machine-stitching, the hemming and felling stitch, the slipstitch, and the tailor's slipstitch.

### The running stitch



### The gathering stitch

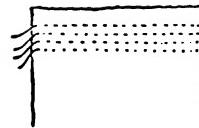


Small, even stitches are called running stitches. Use a medium to small needle to secure the best results. Number 7 is a good average size. Be sure to hold the goods, needle, and thimble as directed in a previous paragraph.

Gathers are made with a line of running stitches drawn up on the thread. The process is called gathering. The needle should not be removed from the goods along the full length of the section to be gathered. The needle is filled with material and it is pushed off the head of the needle and refilled, continuing to the end of the length to be gathered.

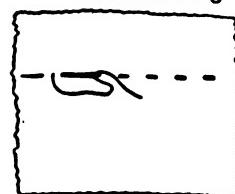
Shirring is made with several rows of gathers placed close together. If several rows are to be hand-shirred, make the desired number of rows of running stitches but do not draw them up or tack any of the rows until they are all made. Then draw up all the rows in one operation and tack each thread separately. The width must be measured before tacking. Shirring often requires a re-enforcement. Cut a bias section of firmly woven thin material that contains some dressing, such as organdy. Baste to the under side of the section that is to be shirred, basting across the section several times. Hand gathers should then be made in even lines in the various rows, making each stitch directly under the stitch above. When shirring on the machine, loosen the tension of the upper thread and lengthen the stitch, then stitch the desired number of parallel lines. When the gathering threads are drawn up, the shirring will be in ridges similar to those of cartridge pleats.

Shirring



A backstitch is used to prevent a stitch from slipping or drawing. It is a plain stitch taken back and over the last stitch, forming a thread both above and below the stitch. When several backstitches are taken in one place, the process is called tacking.

Backstitching

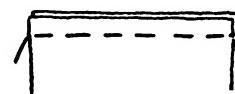


## BASTING STITCHES

Plain basting is made with an even stitch. It differs from the running stitch in that the stitches are longer and farther apart.

Plain basting

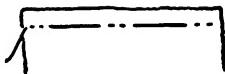
All long seams should be basted with the material resting flat on the table. The material is *not picked up* in the hands, but each stitch is picked through to the table, or basting board. This may seem awkward at first, but it is the best method to use to baste straight. The more bias section of the seam should be uppermost. When extremely bias sections are to be basted, it is advisable first to machine-stitch the raw edge of the bias section before it is placed on the matching section to be basted. Test it after it is stitched to see that it lies flat.



Dressmakers use a quick basting that holds the seam firmly in place with few stitches. Place the edges to be basted flat on the table with the fuller edge uppermost.

Dressmaker's basting

## STITCHES



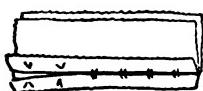
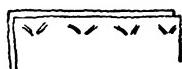
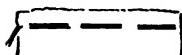
Pin to position and chalk-mark a straight line with the ruler, if the seam is a long straight line. With a knotted double thread—and without taking the seam up in the hands—take two short stitches close together, picking them through to the table. Skip an inch and a half space and take two more small stitches, then continue to skip the space and make two small stitches. Do not tack the ends on long seams. The two small stitches hold the seam and prevent it from slipping, and the long space speeds the work. This stitch holds closer than loose bastings and gives a pleasing appearance to the work.

### Intricate seams

Beginners' dresses should not be made with intricately cut sections with curves and points, nor should the beginner attempt to assemble bias-cut stripes or plaids until she has mastered straight seams. Intricate seams are difficult to assemble and should be basted from the right side. This basting method will be explained in Chapter 9 for the more experienced sewer.

## DRESSMAKER'S TACKS OR THREAD TACKS

### Making dressmaker's tacks



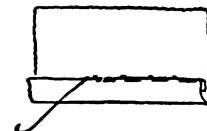
Tailor's tacks are used for tailoring, but they are more difficult to make and require more time than do dressmakers' thread tacks. The dressmaker uses a method that shortens and simplifies the process. The sewing line should be chalk-marked. The seams should be laid flat on the table or on a long basting board. Pin to position every six inches. Use a *double thread* but do not knot it. Pick up one short stitch through both edges of material, then skip a space of an inch and a half and pick up another short stitch. The double threads are drawn into a straight line similar to a double-thread basting made with long spaces and small stitches. Notice that the stitch is not looped as in the tailor's tack. The full length of the seam can be marked very quickly. After the full length is basted for thread tacks, clip apart the long stitch on top of the goods (the threads that joined the short stitches). Clip all threads along the full length of the seam. The seam is now ready to be separated. Open the seam *lengthwise*, parallel to the cut edge, never from the top downward. Fold back the edges until three stitches are visible. Hold the under piece down with the points of the scissors as the seam is drawn open, then clip the double threads apart. Continue to open the seam carefully *parallel* with the edge until all the threads

are opened. Then, before the goods is raised from the table, close the seam and trim off the top threads as close to the goods as possible. The shorter the threads that protrude, the better they will remain in the goods. Dressmaker's basting is made with single thread by taking two short stitches and a space. Dressmaker's tacks are made with double thread by taking one short stitch.

One stitch is used on the hems of practically all garments—the slipstitch. (The tailor's slipstitch is somewhat different and will be described in another section.) The edge is turned under and basted. The thread is caught to the dress or the under-section and, in the same operation, the needle is slipped *into the fold* of the turned edge before it is drawn out. Draw out the thread and catch two threads of the under-section, and, on the same needle, slide the needle into the hem and repeat to the end of the thread.

Wide hems are made by hand. Narrow hems may be made by machine with the sewing-machine attachments, which may be used after much practice. Straight edges are simple to hem by machine, but curves are more difficult if not impractical unless the raw edge is first machine-stitched. Curved hems should be turned and basted flat before stitching. Machine-stitch all hems close to the edge.

Slipstitching  
the hem



Machine-stitching  
the hem

## OCCASIONAL STITCHES

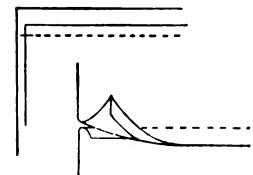
The stitches described in the preceding pages are the stitches generally used and therefore should be learned first. The following stitches are used only on special materials or on underwear.

Finished seams on slips, smocks, and underwear are often flat-felled. Cut the seams three-quarters of an inch wide. Match the right sides. Baste and stitch on the sewing line. Trim off one edge to one-quarter of an inch in width. Turn the longer edge over the shorter edge and *baste* the turned edge flat to the material. Press flat (for tailored results), then turn the garment to the *right* side and stitch flat.

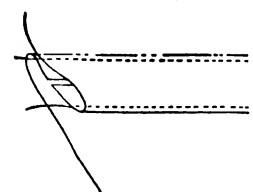
A double-felled seam is used for men's shirts. Cut the seam allowance three-eighths inch wide on both edges. Overlap the body section onto the sleeve and the front section onto the back. (Examine a ready-made shirt.)

Turn under the right-side edge of the body section at one-fourth inch and baste the turned edge to the matching seam of the sleeve and later to the back section. The yoke of the

Flat-felling a seam



Double-felling  
a seam



## STITCHES

body section is set on and the sleeve is set in as it lies flat. The turned edge is basted to its matching seam one-half inch back from the cut edge. Baste flat and stitch the seam from the right side. Stitch close to the edge.

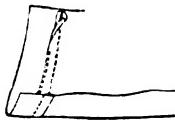
### **Wrong-side stitching**

Turn the garment to the wrong side, fold under the raw edge, and baste flat. Keep the turned edge as uniform in width as possible.

### **Right-side stitching**

Right-side stitching is advisable for the second line of stitching. Turn the garment to the right side and flat-stitch the basted line at one-fourth of an inch from the first stitching.

### **Amateur double felling**



Follow the method for flat-felling seams; match three-fourth-inch seam allowance, baste, and stitch. Trim off the edge under the fold (see correct lapping of seams in double fell). Press the seam and flat-stitch the turned edge from the right side.

Roll under the cut edge and baste. Press flat and machine-stitch from the right side. Stitch over the bastings, stitching at an equal distance from the first row of stitching, approximately one-fourth of an inch.

## FINISHING STITCHES

### **Inside finishing**

The day of artistic needlework on the inside of a dress is past. In the days of our grandmothers, dresses were worn for years, and therefore the inside finish on a dress was a work of art. Often a dress was finished with yards of ribbon and embroidery stitching across the feather boning; it might well have been worn wrongside out. The inside finishes of today's dresses are for necessity rather than for beauty and to keep the material from fraying. Dresses are finished quickly, if they are finished at all. More time should be spent on the problems of the outside of the dress than on the finish of the seams. After all, the dress is to be worn rightside out and is not examined on the inside. The inside, however, should look neat and of a uniform appearance; the seams should be even and smooth but not necessarily finished with fancy stitches.

### **Pinking**



Pinking is the approved method of seam finish if the material is not of the fraying variety. All closely woven materials may be pinked with the handy pinking shears. The pinking can be done as the dress is cut out, as pinking shears are also cutting shears. If the goods is of firm weave

and pinking shears are not available, the seams may either remain unfinished or be pinked by hand with the scissors, folding the seam double for clipping the point. The seam is pinked double and pressed open later.

If the material frays, it should be trimmed off and overcast. If the seam is to be pressed open each side of the seam is overcast separately. Be sure to trim off the loose thread; knot the thread and wind the needle around the edge of the seam as the thimble pushes the needle forward. As the thread is used up do not tack it, but overlap a few stitches with the new thread, and continue. This prevents a drawing on the finish. As the seams may be pressed open, even the armhole seams, be sure to clip all inner curves such as the waistline on the side seams and the armhole, so that the overcasting will not be cut when clipped later. After the seam is pressed, open for overcasting.

French seams are not often used in making dresses. They are especially adapted for use on thin materials and on garments that have straight lines and do not fit closely, such as infants' wear, nightgowns, and so on. When French seams are curved it is difficult to allow sufficient fullness in the first stitching to permit the seam to be turned and stitched again without drawing. However, it is not difficult for the home sewer to achieve skill in handling this seam where conditions make it desirable, if the seams are carefully basted. Stitch a narrow seam on the right side of the garment. Clip off all loose threads. Turn the garment and stitch another seam on the wrong side, encasing the raw edges in the seam. In many cases the French seam can be replaced by the nonrip seam, which can be made with one stitching on the wrong side.

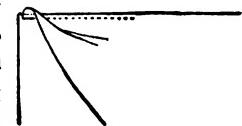
This seam may be used on underwear or on any material where a finished seam is desired. Baste one edge of the seam back on the matching edge, one-half of the seam allowance. For example, if a three-eighths-inch seam is allowed, baste the shorter side at three-eighths of an inch and allow the wider edge to extend twice this width beyond.

Turn over the wide side until its raw edge just meets the edge of the narrow side. Then bring the fold of the wide side to the basting line and stitch flat through the three thicknesses of material, thus finishing the seam with one stitching. After one becomes experienced, this seam can be held in place with a few pins and the edge turned

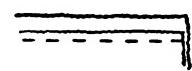
### Overcasting



### The French seam



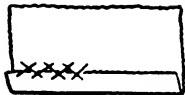
### The nonrip seam



## STITCHES

### Finishing sheer fabrics

### Cross-stitching a seam



over as the seam is stitched. This finish is made quickly and is very satisfactory for nonfitting garments.

This same finish can be used on sheer dresses *after* the dress has been stitched and finished. One side of the seam is trimmed back and the wider side is then rolled over the narrow side, and either slipstitched or held with a running stitch.

A cross-stitch is sometimes used to finish a seam. Start at the left with a straight stitch. Take one stitch above the seam and the next stitch below the seam, gradually working to the right. Stitching from left to right rather than from right to left, as in ordinary seams, will overlap the strands of thread and hold the edge of the material in place. This stitch is sometimes used on parts of a coat lining or on velvet.

Many other stitches that are used in making dresses can be found in some sewing books. These are seldom used, however. Since the aim of this section is to explain the dress construction, all of these superfluous stitches have been omitted.

## MACHINE-BASTING

### Speed in stitching



First



Second

Basting can be quickly accomplished on the sewing machine. Loosen the top tension one-half turn, thus lengthening the stitch. Place odd colors of thread on the bobbin for identification when you remove the basting. Stitch with continuous stitching. After one seam has been finished, draw it to the back for two inches without cutting the threads and start another seam. After the second seam has been started, reach to the back and clip the threads to separate the seams.

Third

The procedure for basting a dress is as follows: Gather all long and short sections on the sewing machine with a loose tension and long stitch. Draw up the bobbin thread. Stitch all short seams such as tucks and darts.

Fourth

Place sections flat on the table, pin centers as marked, and pin the tops and bottoms of joining seams.

Baste all back sections, basting waist and skirt together at the waist line—all waist sections having been assembled and skirt darts made.

Join and pin all front skirt sections together, pinning as they lie flat. Pin crosswise to the seam. Baste on the sewing machine. Assemble the front of the waist, basting it on

the machine; then join waist and skirt, matching the centers, and baste.

Press all sections as they lie flat, pressing the basted seams to one side. The crease thus made will later be used as a guide for final stitching.

Join the shoulder seams, holding the back edge uppermost. Pin at both ends and the center. Ease the back seam onto the shorter front shoulder seam and baste on the machine.

Match and pin side seams as they lie flat. Baste on the machine.

Pin and baste sleeves together, matching rights and lefts.

After the seams have been basted and are ready to stitch, it will require but a few moments of time to straighten all the sewing lines and to perfect them for straight-stitching.

Press each seam over to one side (do not open) and make a crease on one side of the seam on all seams that are not curved. Hip seams are straight from the hips downward but are curved from the hips to the waist. Lift the pressed seams, and the crease will be the line to follow in preference to the basting. Stitch on the crease, and the line will be true and straight.

This pressing not only perfects the seam but gives an encouraging appearance to the dress. It is more interesting to sew when the dress *looks right*.

Fifth

Sixth

Seventh

Eighth

#### **Straightening seams by pressing**



### **QUESTIONS**

1. How is the needle and goods held for rapid sewing?
2. What are the necessary stitches for dressmaking?
3. What are running stitches?
4. How are gathers made on the needle?
5. How is Shirring made?
6. What is a backstitch? When is it used?
7. How should long seams be basted?
8. What part of the seam is uppermost?
9. How should bias seams be treated?
10. How is plain basting made?
11. What is the dressmaker's basting, and when is it used?
12. Are the ends of threads tacked on long seams when basting?
13. How are the inside seams finished?
14. How much time should be spent on the inside finish of a dress?
15. What is the quickest method of inside finish and when should it be used?
16. What finish is used for fraying seams and how may it be made quickly?
17. How are dressmaker's tacks made? When are they used?

18. Why are the top threads clipped apart in dressmaker's tacks before the goods is separated?
19. How is the full-length seam opened when dressmaker's tacks are used?
20. What hem is generally used?
21. When are machine hems used?
22. What is a French seam? Should French seams be used in dressmaking?
23. What is a quick seam finish?
24. How are sheer fabrics finished?
25. How is a cross-stitch made?

## CHAPTER 6

### Cutting and Ripping

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#### CUTTING

Successful cutting requires an understanding of the pattern in reference to the material to be cut, as patterns are placed differently on different materials. The width of the material must also be considered in the selection of the right pattern layout as furnished with the pattern. The up-and-down of the material must also be determined. Examine the material for distinct floral clusters and definite stripes or plaids which should be placed attractively on the pattern section. Velvets and napped weaves also require proper placement, with the *nap* running upward on velvets. Therefore the inexperienced sewer should carefully select her material to avoid difficulties.

**Relation of pattern  
to material**

Small prints of firmly woven material are easy to cut and sew and are becoming to practically all types of figures. Plain material requires more accurate tailoring. Plain seams show uneven stitching while small prints obliterate errors.

The beginner is usually too quick with the scissors. She is so eager to make the dress that she cuts the first section of the pattern without regard for the other sections; she simply opens the pattern and goods and cuts the first section that comes to hand. This procedure often ends in disaster, for if wider seams are allowed or a wider hem is made, the layout will change and the beginner may be amazed to find that all of her pattern sections will not fit on the remaining material. Even a small, important piece forgotten in a haphazard layout may ruin the dress; especially if no more material can be purchased. If there is an abundance of large scraps showing on a trial layout it is

**Planning the  
layout**

## CUTTING AND RIPPING

almost certain that the pattern can be redistributed to better cutting advantage.

If it is necessary to piece an inconspicuous corner, be sure to make the piecing seam along the lengthwise threads of material; crosswise or bias piecing is very unsatisfactory.

### Insufficient material

If there is insufficient material to cut the desired pattern, it is advisable to select another pattern that can be cut from less material. Patterns of bisymmetrical design, in which both sides are alike, can be cut from less material than those with angular sections. Dresses with the front or back cut with a center seam or opening will also cut to better advantage. Such patterns permit these sections of the pattern to utilize material on the selvage edge. When all the sections are cut on a fold, more material is often needed.

### Modifying the pattern

It may be possible to modify the pattern to utilize the goods at hand. This is often necessary when remodeling. The sleeves may be shortened; a cuff may be added; a strip of material may be set across the sleeve as a trimming; an inverted box pleat may be placed down the back of the waist, making the seam under the pleat; a yoke effect made across the upper back or across the front may take a smaller section. The waist pattern can be slashed lengthwise along the lengthwise grain, and a crosswise strip or tucked strip of the same material or even contrasting material may be set into the slashed section. The section when joined should then match the original pattern. This plan of cutting or trimming is excellent for large figures. The lengthwise line reduces the apparent expanse of the front. It might also be an advantage to set godets into the skirt, or it might be possible to add some contrasting material as a trimming. If other material is added to the waist, plan also to add the trimming to the sleeves or skirt to balance the design.

### Pressing the goods

Cutting can be accomplished to better advantage if the goods is pressed before cutting. If the material is a remnant, all the creases should be pressed out. If it is soiled, it should be cleaned. The heavy crease down the center of the folded goods should be at least partially pressed out as it is difficult to make the goods lie flat when this center fold is not used as a fold when cutting. The exact width is important on the cross-back, and a bulge in the material will make the back wider.

### Crosswise threads

The crosswise threads must be straight on all fabric that is cut on a double fold. Tearing the edge across the top

of new material at the beginning will not suffice. This operation must be repeated *each time* the material is folded over for cutting. If the crosswise thread is not straightened, the draping of the garment is changed: a skirt will hang with fullness to one side, even though both sections may have been cut *exactly* like the outline of the pattern. The length-wise thread mark on the pattern may have been ignored on the under-section. Straightening the crosswise thread for the width of the complete section of pattern to be cut will insure accurate cutting on the under-section of the fold.

Use plenty of pins when cutting. You have purchased a pattern, and the lines of the pattern should be followed. This cannot be done by guess. Pin the pattern along the sewing lines with the pins resting in the line as they will be used later. Lay aside the sections as they are cut, but do not remove the pattern.

Take time to cut. Plan to be undisturbed. Keep your mind on what you are doing, as it is easy to make one wrong cut that might ruin the garment. It is advisable to be alone when cutting. It may be interesting to *sew* with friends, but a friendly visit may interfere with the *cutting* operation.

Use a large flat surface. Two or three card tables are excellent if a long table is not available. The soft surface is excellent for pinning the goods to place. Do not cut on the bed; the floor is preferable if no tables are available, but use papers or a sheet to keep the material clean.

As an extra precaution, it is well to review some of the important items to check before the scissors are actually placed into the material. Cultivate the habit of going over these questions each time a garment is ready to cut.

1. If the material is folded double, is there a straight edge at the top?
2. Is there a nap or pile in the material?
3. Are there any large floral patterns to be arranged?
4. Are there any stripes to match?
5. Are all the important sections of the pattern placed?
6. Has each section been placed on the correct thread?
7. Is there sufficient material?
8. Are all necessary seam allowances made?
9. Has the hem been allowed for?
10. Has the pattern been placed economically?
11. Has the belt been planned?
12. Are all necessary small sections planned?

Plenty of pins

"Haste makes waste"

Checking for cutting

**CUTTING AND RIPPING**

13. If the pattern is asymmetric, are the right and left sides placed correctly?
14. Is the pattern pinned exactly on the fold?
15. Has any special seam finish been allowed?
16. Has extra length or width been allowed?
17. Name and identify the sections to determine if all the back, front, and sleeves have been planned.

**Crooked cutting**

It is difficult for the home sewer to cut edges sufficiently straight and true to the pattern to be able to machine-stitch the seam without marking the line. This is especially important when working with a perfectly fitting pattern, as a half-inch variation on seams may produce a misfit in the garment.

**Home sewers' difficulty in cutting straight**

The factory cutter has the advantage over the home cutter in that he has a long cutting table, several thicknesses of material that aid in retaining the flatness of the material, heavy flat patterns that do not require perfect pinning on all edges, and an electric cutting machine that glides over the material without shifting the goods. The home sewer is cutting no more than two thicknesses of fabric, and she may be obliged to cut on a small surface with scissors that are not as sharp as they might be. Under these circumstances it is indeed difficult for her to cut a true line for stitching. But the sewing lines of all the dress can be marked in a few minutes, and, although everyone should try to develop skill in cutting a clean, true edge, it is even more important to sew on the given sewing line than it is to cut a perfectly straight line to use as a guide for stitching.

**Cutting to end of blades**

Cutting straight lines and curves with the shears is an art. Practice with goods as it lies flat on the table; striped material or paper napkins can be used. Open the blades of the shears wide, set them on the goods high into the shears and then close them to the ends of the blades. Repeat the operation until the full line is cut. The long stroke prevents the hackled edges produced by short strokes.

**Cutting curves**

Curves are cut in the same manner, except that the scissors are gradually turned with the curve; but the curve is cut in one stroke, starting at the open end of the shears and continuing to the ends of the blades, turning the shears while cutting. Mark circles on paper and cut the curves. This method will eliminate hackled edges.

All inner corners should be clipped in when the dress is being cut out. Clip in the corner while the pattern is pinned to the material. The clip will be made to within an eighth of an inch of the sewing line so that the seam may be turned back later when the sewing line is marked. Failure to clip points often results in curved corners. Place the left thumbnail on the stitch to prevent cutting the thread.

Sharp scissors are necessary for sewing and can easily be kept sharp. Keep a small whetstone in the sewing box and when the scissors become dull, sharpen them at home.

Rest the open scissors on the table or sewing machine, holding them in the left hand. As the blades are open you will notice the edge of the blade. It has a flat bevel edge—not a sharp edge like a knife. It is this narrow, flat edge that is to be sharpened and not *the flat sides of the blades*. Many scissors are ruined when the flat sides of the blades are sharpened.

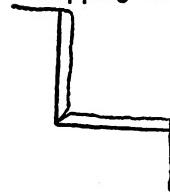
With the blades open, sharpen the bevel edge across the top of the lower blade that is resting on the table, rubbing the whetstone over the narrow edge from the outer sides of the scissors to the inner side, which will be rubbing from the right to the left. Make several strokes with the stone until the full length of the blade has been sharpened. Then reverse the handles and sharpen the other blade.

Try the scissors or shears and if there still remains one dull spot, repeat the operation on this spot. You will be pleasantly surprised at the results.

Did you know that you carry your scissor oil with you? If your scissors squeak or bind, rub each blade with the fingers. There is sufficient natural oil on the hands to oil the scissors and they will then run smoothly without having oil dripping on the material. If they are rusty between the blades, it may be necessary to drop one drop of sewing machine oil where the blades are joined.

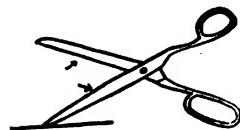
Blunt sewing-machine needles can also be sharpened with the whetstone. The curled point, which is usually caused by pulling the material backward on the machine too rapidly, can be sharpened off with a few strokes on the stone. The needle can then be used for the heavier sewing or for practice work.

**Clipping corners**



**Sharpening scissors  
at home**

**Sharpening bevel  
edge**



**Scissor oil  
on finger**

**Sharpening blunt  
machine needles**

## RIPPING

### Ripping—if necessary

One of the first lessons in sewing is to learn to acquire the patience to "rip." A good seamstress must have the determination to produce perfect results even if she must rip. She is not satisfied to leave something unfinished or to permit a mistake to be left in the garment. She has pride in her work and wants to produce the best results. This may require some ripping.

The better the sewing problems are understood, the less ripping will be necessary, for it is usually inexperience in handling different materials that produce poor results. Therefore, if you follow carefully all of the construction problems, you will not make mistakes.

### Ripping by pulling threads

The method of ripping that yields best results is that of pulling out the threads. A chain stitch will be pulled from the loop end of the stitch. A lock stitch will be drawn out from the *bobbin thread*, if it is loose. If the stitch is tight, first one thread and then the other will be drawn out. This method requires more time, but it will not draw the goods out of shape.

### Ripping the chain stitch



Many dressmakers prefer the chain-stitch machine because its stitching is easy to rip. But chain stitching also has its disadvantages. It is often difficult to find which end of the seam to rip. Sugar sacks that are sewed with chain stitch often test the patience of the housewife who is trying to open them without cutting the cloth.

A chain stitch makes a series of knots after it leaves the material. Therefore the thread should be cut close to the end of the seam. Examine the stitch and determine which end is the loop end of the stitch (see illustration). The ripping will start from the loop end. Pick out the thread from the loop and the thread will then pull out.

### Ripping with a razor blade

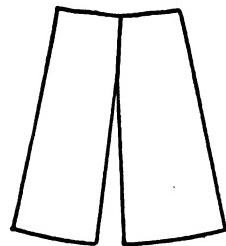
The razor blade is indispensable for ripping. Use the blades with the ridge on one edge and the finger will not be cut. Pin one end of the seam to the basting board, which is either held in the lap or rests flat on the table. Draw on the edge of the seam until the machine stitch is visible. Touch this thread with the razor blade and it will separate. Draw down again and touch the thread, gradually repeating the operation until the full length of

the seam is ripped. Touch the thread only and not the goods.

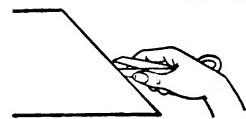
If the garment is old and the threads are worn, the seam can be opened by pulling; but be sure to *rip against the threads of the goods*. That is, if you are ripping a skirt seam, rip from the bottom upward rather than from the top downward, as the crosswise threads tear more readily than the lengthwise. Ripped seams and hems on garments to be remodeled should be pressed flat with a damp cloth. Heavy creases interfere with accurate stitching. It is especially important to secure a flat surface after armholes, necklines, and shoulders have been ripped.

When ripping with scissors, grasp them in the hand near the points. Open them a very small space and "clip" the thread. Do not lay scissors in the lap when sewing as they are likely to be drawn closed when they are picked up and may cut the dress.

Ripping by pulling the goods



Scissor ripping



## QUESTIONS

1. Should the pattern be understood before cutting?
2. What should be done if material has a nap or pile?
3. How are large floral patterns treated?
4. What is done for matching stripes?
5. Should all sections of the pattern be checked for placement on the material?
6. Why is it important to cut on the correct thread of material?
7. What is done for extra seam allowances?
8. Why is it necessary to check right and left sections?
9. Why is it necessary to make a fold on the straight thread?
10. Should extra length for hem be allowed when necessary?
11. What is one of the beginners' first mistakes?
12. Why does haphazard cutting often ruin the garment?
13. Should the goods be pressed before cutting? Why?
14. What should be done if there is insufficient material?
15. What are some of the types of dresses that cut economically?
16. Is it advisable to cut quickly?
17. What kind of a surface is used for cutting?
18. Why should plenty of pins be used?
19. When should the pattern be removed from the goods?
20. Is it difficult to cut straight? Why?
21. Why can a factory cutter cut straight?
22. How should scissors be handled in cutting?
23. How may curves be cut perfectly?
24. When are inner points clipped?

**CUTTING AND RIPPING**

25. How far are they clipped?
26. Can scissors be sharpened at home? With what?
27. How should scissors be held?
28. What part of the blade is sharpened?
29. How are scissors sharpened?
30. What is used for scissor oil?
31. How are blunt machine needles sharpened?
32. What are the five methods of ripping?
33. How is the razor blade used for ripping?
34. How is a chain stitch pulled open?
35. How is an old seam pulled open?
36. How are the scissors held when ripping?
37. What is the most perfect method of ripping?
38. What is necessary for easy ripping?

## CHAPTER 7

### Marking Sewing Lines

---

A pattern can only be followed accurately if it is held firmly to the material. The material is lifted from the table when the shears slide under it. Holding the pattern down with the hand or placing weights on the pattern will not produce accurate results. To test this, check the accuracy after cutting. Press the section on the fold and carefully match the pattern to it. It is probable that there will be a great discrepancy.

Stitching a straight seam without a line to follow not only requires perfect cutting but also an accurate eye for gauging the correct distance between the cut edge and the needle. Very few people have a true eye for measure. It is advisable, therefore, not to depend on the eye for true stitching but rather to crease-mark a true line for basting and stitching. After the material has been cut, the sewing line is pressed, thus marking all of the dress very quickly. This is especially necessary on all intricate joinings such as curves and angles and all fitting lines on the sides of the garment. The time spent in marking the seams is repaid in the perfect results when basting.

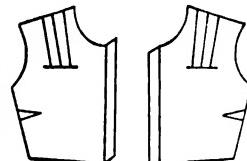
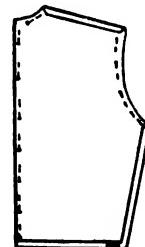
Practically all materials other than velvets and heavy woolens can be marked in this manner. Cottons, silks, rayon fabrics, light woolens and linens can all be creased and will retain the crease until the seam is basted. Not only are the seams marked with a crease, but a crease mark will also perfect the lines of the darts, tucks, pleats, and corners so effectively for final stitching that sewing is made easy.

Preparation for the creasing should be made when the pattern is pinned to the goods. Place pins along the sewing lines. If the pattern is to be cut double, then both the

Crooked cutting



Press-marking  
seams



Preparation for  
creasing

## MARKING SEWING LINES



**Pinning**

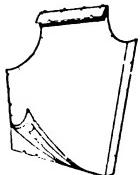
right and left sides will be creased in one operation.

The double fold of material will be creased with the pattern, folding all back at the sewing line. When the folded section is opened, the crease will be made on opposite sides of the material, but a continuous line will be found to follow for the sewing line.

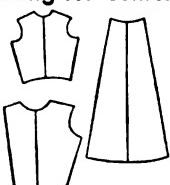
The pattern should be pinned to the goods along the sewing line so that the pins rest along the line of the seam when creased. This requires careful pinning, and is also necessary when sewing perfectly by a pattern. The pattern has been made for a given size and all the seams have been added. For the dress to fit as it was intended for the standard figure, the seam must be made at a given space from the edge of the pattern, each pattern having its respective seam allowance. When the given sewing line is followed accurately, a wider seam allowance may be cut to permit a let-out or to give more material for seam finish in materials that fray. The let-out is most essential for perfect fitting; but whether the goods is let out or taken in, any alteration should be made from the original sewing line. The crease will mark it perfectly.

Lay aside the sections as they are cut until all of the dress is cut out. Do not remove the pattern from the material. Place the pattern with the material pinned to it onto the pressboard with the pattern side down. Fold back the edge of the pattern until the pins are visible and press the turned edge with a warm iron. This procedure will make a straight true line for basting on both the right and the left sides.

**Pressing the seam**



**Marking for centers**



**Marking darts**



Pinning the pattern closely produces accuracy of cutting and also gives an accurate line which may be creased quickly for sewing lines. The whole dress can be marked for centers and sewing lines in a few minutes. Crease-mark all center lines of both the waist and skirt. Crease lightly while the pattern is pinned to the material. This eliminates long, loose, and inaccurate basting lines for center markings.

All tucks and darts should be marked when marking the seams. Place pins along the line of the tuck or dart, with the pins resting in the sewing line. Pick up the goods with the pattern pinned to it and press the line of the dart or tuck. Press one side of the dart and then the other side, thus making two lines that intersect. Tucks may be creased in the same manner.

Place a row of pins close together down each tuck indicated on the pattern and through both thicknesses of material as folded. Lift each tuck and fold over with the pins protruding and press the line of the tuck. After all of the tucks are marked with a straight crease, fold down the goods across the end of the row of tucks and press-mark a cross-crease line as a guide for an even ending of all tucks. This will eliminate tedious measuring.

Pleats are also easily crease-marked. It is advisable to crease-mark one thickness of material at a time to make each pleat fall into its natural fold. When material is creased double for pleats, one side must later be reversed at the fold to make the pleat lie flat. (Make a sample in paper.)

Crease-mark the center line. Open the material and pin the pattern to the center line. Baste or pin the pattern down each crease of the pleat as it lies flat on a table. Fold in the pleat as the pattern directs, and press the pleat, pattern, and material together.

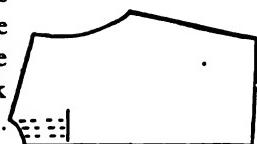
After all of the pleats on one side are creased, remove the pattern and press it. Pin the other side and repeat the operation. The pleats are now all pressed to position with no confusion as to how each pleat will lie.

Heavy pleating is creased in single folds. In creasing pleats, use a long ironing board. Place the pattern side down on the board, draw it back until the pleat line is visible, and press.

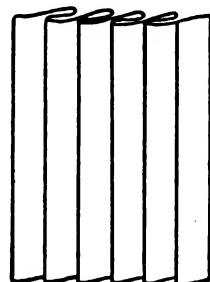
A trial hem can also be creased when the dress is being marked, pressing up all skirt sections on the hem allowance. A first fitting is always more satisfactory when the hem is basted so as better to determine the correct length.

All inner corners should be clipped when the dress is cut. It will then be possible to press back the sewing lines of the edges of the angle, which is quite necessary to the basting of perfect points. The final clip should be made to within two or three threads of the actual sewing line so as to make a perfect point. Press-mark all sewing lines of intricate points and angles.

### Marking the ends of tucks

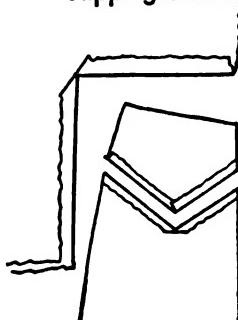


Marking pleats



Marking the hemline

Clipping corners

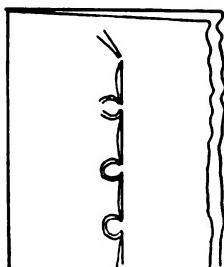


## MARKING SEWING LINES

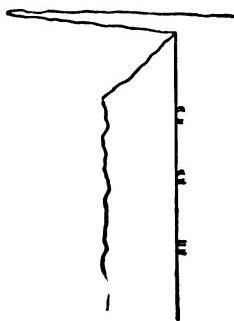
### **Marking all fitting lines**

### **Unnecessity of marking curves**

### **Using tailor's tacks for inner marks**



### **Separating the tacks**



### **Tailor's chalk**

It is important to press-mark all the side seams of the waist, the skirt, and the sleeves, as these seams will be the fitting lines of the dress.

It is not necessary to press-mark the curves of the neck, the armhole, or the sleeve cap. It is advisable, however, to press-mark the back section at the armhole on the straight section of the back. The curve under the arm need not be marked. Cut narrow seams on all curves, especially inner curves, as a wide seam makes the curve smaller.

To assemble the creased lines, match the creases and not the cut edges. Watch both sides of the seam when pinning, or use a slipstitch. Baste working from the right side. Careful marking, matching, and basting are repaid in tailored results.

Tailor's tacks are used for marking inner lines and curves such as occur in the placement of a pocket; but they are seldom used by the dressmaker for marking seams.

If the pattern has printed lines, holes must be clipped into the line for the tacks. Use a double strand of thread. Take two stitches through the perforation, leaving the second stitch with a loop above the stitch. Skip to the next perforation and take two more stitches, leaving a loop above the stitch; repeat if necessary.

After the tailor's tacks are made it will be necessary to clip the long threads that join the stitches between the perforations. The pattern cannot be removed unless these threads are clipped apart.

After the long stitch is severed, *fold the goods back carefully, parallel with at least two of the stitches*, opening the material until both stitches are visible. Draw them apart sufficiently wide to clip them apart. The shorter the stitches, the better they will remain in the goods. After all the stitches are clipped apart, trim off the long threads on top of the goods.

If the stitches are separated one at a time, they will usually be pulled out of the goods; opening two or more at a time helps to hold them firm until they are separated.

Tailor's chalk is indispensable in the sewing room if accuracy is desired. It is used for marking straight lines, bias strips, hems, alterations, and so on.

When using tailor's chalk to mark a straight line, follow

the edge of a yardstick or a long ruler. Soft materials usually must be marked in dash-lines to keep from displacing the material. Bias-binding material should also be marked true by chalked dashlines.

Tailor's chalk is also used when blocking out an original pattern or when cutting from a pattern that has no seam allowance. If no seams are allowed on the pattern, it is advisable to make a dashline for cutting as a warning not to cut off the seam allowance. This seam allowance can then be pressed back over the edge of the pattern, thus giving the actual sewing line.

A tracing wheel is seldom used on materials, but it is invaluable when tracing off patterns for a duplication section.

It is even more necessary to crease-mark for stitching than it is for basting, as it is sometimes necessary to alter the basted lines. But after the desired fitting is secured and the final basting has been made, place the dress on the press-board wrong side out and press all the seams over to one side to make a straight crease for stitching. *The seam is not opened.*

This crease will eliminate any crooks in the basting, as some material, because it slips and slides easily, is difficult to handle. Points, angles, side seams and long seams of skirts, should always be crease-marked before stitching.

After the crease has been made, *lift the creased seam and follow the crease for machine-stitching. The line of the seam will be perfect.*

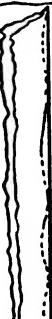
It is possible to stitch without basting if one is experienced in sewing, but such a procedure usually results in much ripping by the amateur.

The factory operator never bastes; but she sews thousands of the same kind of seams and soon becomes an expert in her work. If the home sewer is working with gingham or some other firmly woven material, it *may* be safe to stitch without basting; but silks and soft materials should always be basted.

#### Blocking material

#### Tracing wheel

#### Importance of marking for stitching



#### Stitching without basting

### QUESTIONS

1. Why is it necessary to mark sewing lines?
2. Which lines should be marked?
3. What is a quick method of marking?
4. What materials can be marked in this manner?

**MARKING SEWING LINES**

5. What materials cannot be marked in this manner?
6. What other parts of the dress are crease-marked?
7. When are the pins placed for crease-marking?
8. If the material is to be cut double, what happens?
9. When is a wider seam to be allowed?
10. When should the pattern be removed from the goods after cutting?
11. How are the pattern and material placed on the pressboard?
12. How is the seam pressed back?
13. Is the seam pressed on both the right and left sides of the goods?
14. When are darts and tucks marked?
15. When are the pins placed? How are the lines creased?
16. How is a perfect ending for a row of tucks made?
17. Are both sides creased simultaneously?
18. Does one side require reversing the crease where doubled?
19. Can a straight line then be followed?
20. Should pleats be marked on a double fold of material?
21. How is the pattern pinned to the goods?
22. What must be done to perforated lines?
23. How is the pattern pinned and the pleats marked?
24. Should a trial hem be creased?
25. What should be done to inner corners?
26. Should corner sewing lines be marked? Why?
27. How far in is the corner clipped on inner corners?
28. Why is it necessary to mark all side seams?
29. What seams are unnecessary to mark?
30. What cross-back seams should be marked?
31. What kind of seams should be cut on curves? Why?
32. When are tailor's tacks made?
33. Must holes be made in printed patterns so that tailor's tacks may be made with a loop?
34. How many stitches are taken for each tack?
35. Are the long threads separated on top before the seam is separated?
36. How is the goods opened to separate the tacks?
37. Is the seam opened narrow or wide?
38. Do short threads hold better than long threads?
39. What should be done to the long threads on top?
40. Do dressmaker's tacks follow a chalk line?
41. When are they used?
42. When is tailor's chalk used? How?
43. How is a bias marked with chalk?
44. If no seams are allowed, what indication should be made?
45. When is a tracing wheel used?
46. How is a basted seam straightened for stitching?
47. How is the seam placed on the pressboard?
48. Is the seam pressed open or over to one side?
49. What should be done to points and angles and side seams?
50. Why can factory operators stitch without basting?

## CHAPTER 8

### Making Darts and Tucks

---

It is often necessary to make darts and tucks in pieces of the dress before it is assembled and stitched.

Darts are made with two given lines that converge at a point. These lines, when joined, will lift the seam the width of the space between the lines and will produce a rounded surface to fit the curves of the body. Darts are also used instead of gathers to distribute fullness. Darts slant toward the curve wherever placed.

The woman with erect posture, even if she is small, requires wider darts than does the woman of average-size figure. The erect woman appears to be drawing her shoulders backward, while in reality she is not in a strained position but is standing normally for her narrow shoulders. Erect posture produces a more prominent bust, while stooped posture reduces the apparent size of the bust. Both may measure for the same size pattern, but each will require a different dart arrangement to secure perfect fitting (see *Fitting*).

The woman of erect figure has a narrow back and wider front, and thus the length of the shoulder seams is reduced. She will require less material through the back and more through the front of her dress. The circumference will be the same on all figures measuring for the same size pattern. The surplus material dropping over the arm is trimmed off of the *back* seam but may not be trimmed off of the front edge. More darts should be allowed when cutting the front, if the shoulder has no fitting arrangement in darts or gathers. If the armhole is trimmed to fit the narrow shoulders in front, a dart must be drawn down under the arm and

Darts defined



Influence of erect posture on darts

Changes in shoulder seams

## MAKING DARTS AND TUCKS

**Influence of small arms on darts**

lifted into an additional dart on the underarm seam. If the dress has a shoulder fitting, it is possible to ease over this surplus material into the shoulder darts, gathers, or shirrings.

The woman with a large bust often requires the same shoulder fitting as does the smaller woman, but her fitting may be complicated by her arms being small in proportion to her size. This, too, will influence the size of the darts. Small arms require small sleeves and small armholes for proper fitting. This allowance for a smaller armhole must be allowed in the original cutting. (See *Fitting*.) Therefore posture, back widths, shoulder widths, and arm sizes all influence the size of the darts if perfect fitting is desired.

**Darts on waist**

Darts are usually found on the front of the waist at the shoulder seam, the underarm seam, or the waistline. Princess lines usually require many darts, as the curves of the body must be fitted.

**Darts on skirts and sleeves**

Darts are placed at the backs of skirts to fit the curve of the body below the waistline. Sleeves that are cut in one with the shoulder may have darts. Darts are also used in the designs of full sleeves.

**Perfecting the dart**

Wherever darts are made they should be made expertly, for poorly made darts are very conspicuous. It is important that dart lines be followed carefully. If the pattern calls for a straight dart, the lines must be stitched perfectly straight. If the dart is curved, the curve must be followed exactly. To make straight dart lines, mark the lines of the dart with a continuous line and not a few tailor's tacks, as these are not sufficiently near each other to follow for basting. Mark with a ruler if necessary, using tailor's chalk.

**Basting the dart**

When basting a dart, pin it the full length as it lies flat and then baste from the point to the seam or wider portion; but when stitching, stitch from the wide part toward the point. The dart should not twist when basted. There should be no fullness to ease into the edges of darts.

**Crease-marking the dart**

It is advisable to straighten the sewing line of the dart after it is basted and before it is stitched. Draw a chalk line on heavy material, using a ruler. Then the material can be crease-marked by dropping the bulk of the material over the end of the pressboard or tailor's cushion so that the curve below the dart is at the end of the board. Press the dart to one side to straighten the line.

**Underarm darts**

Underarm darts are shorter than shoulder darts and are used on many dresses that have no other method of fitting



the curves of the waist front. When darts are not desired, gathers at the waistline can be used, but they are not always required. It is possible to stretch some material and thus eliminate the need for darts; but this is not always possible and is seldom advisable.

The shoulder dart is much longer than the underarm dart. The front edge is on a straighter thread of material than is the back edge. Be sure to mark the sewing lines with a crease or chalk before basting. Pin and baste with the material flat on the table. After stitching, tie the thread ends to prevent the thread from working through and loosening the stitch.

Darts on heavy material should be trimmed off and pressed open, cutting off the dart to a half-inch seam and then splitting the end to within an eighth of an inch of the point. If moisture can be used, press as directed in rules for pressing.

Place the point of the dart over the end of the pressboard so that it will lie flat. Press the point over the curve of the board, and any fullness will disappear if it has been stitched correctly.

Skirt darts on lightweight material are not cut open but are pressed toward the center on the wrong side so as to form a panel effect on the back. Darts made of heavy material, however, are always split and pressed open. Under-arm darts are usually pressed downward and are not split.

Many dresses are made with tucks at the back of the neck or at the shoulder in front. These tucks should be crease-marked as directed in marking sewing lines so that it will not be necessary to waste time in measuring. Small tucks are usually made on the wrong side of the goods and are called "inverted" tucks. Tucks differ from darts in that they are made the same width the full length of the tuck, or nearly so, while a dart is stitched to a point. Pin tucks are made very narrow and are used as a trimming.

Stitch the tuck from the seam end to the dress end of the tuck so that the end threads will be loose and perfect for tying. If the material is of firm weave it can be held firm at the end when stitching. When the end of the tuck is reached, hold the goods and prevent it from feeding under the needle so that two or more machine stitches will be made at the end of the tuck. The threads can then be trimmed off without tying.

### Shoulder darts

### The point of the dart



### Skirt darts

### Tucks

### Stitch-tacking

## MAKING DARTS AND TUCKS

After the darts and tucks are basted, the dress is ready to be assembled unless there are bound buttonholes to make. These should be made on the sections before they are basted together. Instructions for bound buttonholes are given in Chapter 11.

### QUESTIONS

1. What are darts?
2. When are they used?
3. Where are they used?
4. Which way do they slant?
5. Is it always a large bust that requires a large dart?
6. Are the side lines of darts straight or curved?
7. What happens when the lines are curved?
8. What must be followed to stitch a straight dart?
9. Which way is a dart pinned together?
10. Which way is it basted? How is it stitched?
11. Are tucks in the back of the neck made on the right side?
12. What is the difference between a tuck and a dart?
13. What are pin tucks? When are they used?
14. From which end are tucks stitched?
15. How are the ends of tucks fastened?

## CHAPTER 9

### Right-Side Basting

---

Intricate seams of angular or bias cut should not be attempted by the beginner. The more experienced sewer can easily assemble these intricate seams by basting them from the right side, where the joining edges and the finished effect is plainly visible. Perfect matching of lines and stripes and the elimination of puckers can all be accomplished easily by using slip-basting from the right side.

Slip-basting

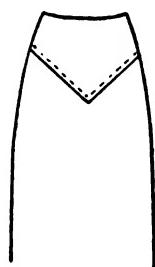
Exclusive dressmakers and modistes design their garments with many intricate seamings which add both smartness and value to the garment but which should only be attempted by the more experienced sewer.

Flat-stitching, or stitching the seam from the right side, often gives a "home-made" effect to a dress unless it is of the tailored type. In this type flat-stitching is advisable, but the softer-line dresses should be stitched from the inside only.

Flat-stitching

Even though the dress is of the flat-stitched type, the seam should also be stitched on the inside before turning the dress to stitch from the right side. If a well-made dress is examined, this will be found to be true. It is necessary, therefore, to learn to stitch intricate seams from the inside to be able to make them as they should be made with double stitching.

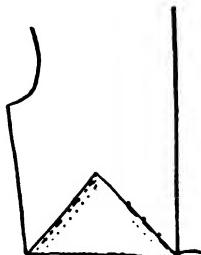
If flat-stitching is to be used, it should be made very close to the seam, stitching through three thicknesses of material, as the entire seam is pressed to one side. Only heavy, tailored coats have the flat-stitching placed away from the seam. All dress stitching should be made very close to the seam; the thinner the material, the closer to the seam the stitching should be placed.



Stitching close to  
the seam

## RIGHT-SIDE BASTING

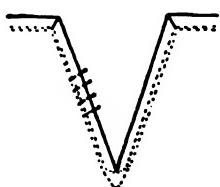
## When used



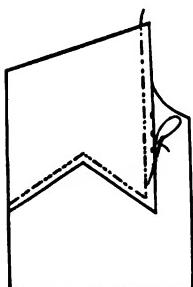
Preparing seams

## Yokes

## Pinning to place



Slipstitching to place



## Pressing

Right-side basting or slip-basting is a helpful method of basting curves, angles, applied facings, converging lines, stripes, plaids, and alteration lines. It is possible to see the finished effect while the basting progresses, as the seam will lie flat. Much of the beauty of a striped or plaid dress is in the perfect matching of the converging lines, and this can be easier accomplished with right-side basting than with any other method. All edges should be machine-stitched close to the sewing line before assembling.

It is necessary to prepare the seams when basting from the right side, as one edge will be applied to the matching flat edge. One edge must be folded under, pressed, and basted or pinned before it is applied. All inner points must be clipped to permit the seam to be pressed back; and all curves, especially of loosely woven material, should be machine-stitched around the raw edge before the seam is turned back. The edge is then basted back and pressed flat before it is applied.

If the section to be applied is a yoke, then, since all yokes are applied to the garment rather than the garment being applied to the yoke, press back the seam of the yoke. This rule also applies to flat-stitching.

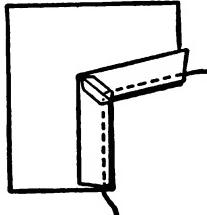
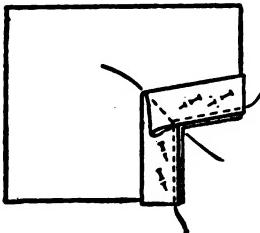
Baste flat and pin the prepared section to the matching seam exactly as it should appear in the finished garment. Pin the prepared seam on *top* of the matching edge of the seam, placing the pins close together so that the material can be picked up in the hands if necessary *after* it has been matched and pinned to place.

Baste the seam flat if possible. This can be done if the seam is long; if curved, it must be held in the hands. Take one stitch on the under-section and draw out the thread, then slide the needle into the fold of the pressed edge and, on the same needle that holds this stitch, catch a thread of the under-section and draw out the thread only a short space. Repeat for three stitches before the long thread is pulled through. The needle catching both the top and bottom material on one stitch prevents the material from sliding out of position. The long stitch is taken in the fold of the pressed edge and the short stitch taken in the lower edge of the seam.

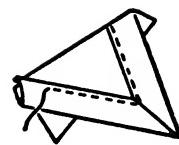
After the seam is basted, press well to secure a straight line to follow on the wrong side for stitching. Lift the seam on

the wrong side and *stitch on the crease*. Press after stitching on the wrong side before stitching on the right side.

A mitered corner on a hem or facing is finished with a diagonal joining seam. The facing is stitched to the dress. The mitered corner is then pinned closed and the seam is pressed to one side to form a perfect line for the joining seam. After stitching the joining seam on this



#### Mitered corners



crease, press the seam open and trim. The mitered facing or hem is then turned to the right side and attached to the garment to secure a straight line to follow for stitching.

If the material is loosely woven, as in coatings, the inner points will fray and should be stayed across the point.

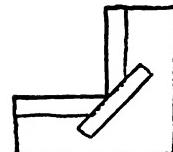
Clip the inner point to within two or three threads of the sewing line and press back the edges. Stretch out the corner to a straight line and, across this straight line, flat-stitch a selvage of the goods, placing the selvage on the right side of the goods and stitching it flat. The seam on the cut edge must be very narrow at the ends and diminish to three threads at the point. When this point is pressed back, the point will not fray. The seam can then be applied to the matching edge.

When stitching corners, stitch to the point. Lower the needle into the goods; raise the presser foot of the machine; and swing the goods around the needle, using the needle for a pivot. When the new line for stitching is in position, lower the needle bar and continue to stitch. This will stitch a corner to a true point.

If an acute angle is to be joined, it is advisable to apply the wider section of the joining seam. If it is to be flat-stitched, the seam can be pressed over to the opposite side later. If it is to be applied as in an applied facing, then the point must be carefully prepared before basting.

Press back the edges of the angle. Turn back the material across the point. Then trim off the surplus seam allowance

#### Inner angles

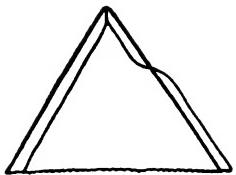


#### Stitching corners

#### Joining acute angles



## RIGHT-SIDE BASTING



### **Shaped facings**

both at the point and on the sides of the seams at the point. This will finish the point and prevent the threads from protruding beyond the edge of the finished seam, which will then be pinned and basted to place. These seams may be stitched from the wrong side if right-side basting methods are used. Clip into the inner point on the wrong side, press, lift the seam, and stitch on the crease on the wrong side.

All shaped facings used as trimmings must be basted from the right side to secure the best results, even if they are to be flat-stitched later. There should be no puckers in the facing and it should lie flat. The best results can be secured if the raw edge is machine-stitched before turning back the edge. Press flat before applying to the garment.

## QUESTIONS

1. What type of dress is flat-stitched?
2. Should flat-stitched seams also be stitched from the inside first?
3. How close to the seam is flat-stitching made?
4. When is wide flat-stitching used?
5. What is used to secure perfect results when basting intricate seams? When is it used?
6. How is the end of the seam prepared?
7. Is a yoke applied to the garment or the garment applied to the yoke?
8. How are the prepared sections applied? How are they basted?
9. How is the stitch made? What is done after basting?
10. What must be done to the inner corners?
11. What line is folded on the wrong side for stitching?
12. How is an inner corner stayed?
13. What is done to perfect acute angles?
14. How are shaped facings applied?

## CHAPTER 10

# Assembling the Dress

---

Lay aside the sections of the garment as they are cut, placing all the back sections together and all the front sections together, both waist and skirt. Place all the sleeve sections together and separate all the trimming sections. The patterns should remain on all cut sections until the material is ready for basting.

If a special section of material is to be reserved for some purpose, fold it up and place a pin in it for identification later; otherwise it may be cut up for bindings.

The sewing lines will be marked after all the dress is cut. All inner points will be clipped to within a few threads of the sewing line so that they can be folded back at this line.

If the material can be creased with the iron, it is advisable to crease-mark all the sewing lines as directed in the lesson on marking. Mark all tucks, darts, pleats, center fronts and center backs, all folds, and all intricate seams such as points. If these lines cannot be creased, they should be marked with chalk, tailor's tacks, or dressmaker's tacks. All of these lines must be made perfectly.

Gather small sections on the sewing machine with a loose tension and a long stitch. Stitch from the right side, then draw up the bobbin thread. Sewing-machine gathers distribute evenly; no tacking is necessary.

When pinning, basting, or stitching, hold the fuller side *uppermost*. Remember the rule for ruffles: the ruffle is basted to the dress and not the dress to the ruffle.

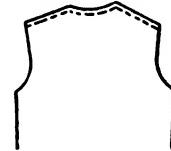
If the dress is to have bound buttonholes, they should be made before the dress is assembled, unless the garment will require extreme alterations. As practically all of the alteration will be made on the side seams and shoulders, however, this will affect the center section but little.

**Grouping the sections**

**Special pieces**

**Inner points**

**Marking**



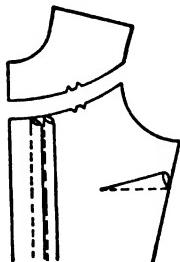
**Gathering**

**Basting**

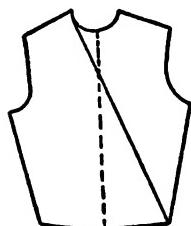
**Bound buttonholes**

## ASSEMBLING THE DRESS

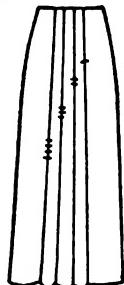
### Tucks—darts—yokes



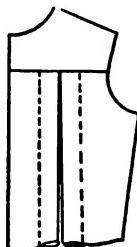
### Double front



### Assembling



### Pleated sections



### Bias sections

Carefully baste all darts, pinning the darts so that they will be made to match; baste all tucks; make any sheering or gathers and attach the front section to any possible yoke effect in the front only. If the yoke is curved (see rules for right-side basting to perfect it), match all notches when basting. Baste the front of the waist complete and press all the seams over to one side on the wrong side of the goods; stitch on the crease. This procedure will perfect all the lines for stitching and will give a pleasing effect to the work. It is far more thrilling to sew when each section develops perfectly.

If the front is made in two overlapping sections, then the sections should be basted together down the center before the skirt is basted to the front. The front is made complete, and the back is made complete, and the two are then joined together. If the front has bound buttonholes, these should be made and the facing applied before the two sections are basted down the center. The shoulder line of any front facing may be joined to the back facing easily after the waistlines have been assembled.

Assemble the front of the skirt complete with pins, matching all long sections as they lie flat on the table. Match any right and left pieces to their matching seams, such as a skirt panel, and pin to place immediately. If the skirt has several panels, each should be carefully notched and marked with numbers with tailor's chalk. Lay out the center seam or panel, pin both left and right of the matching sides to place, then match the left and right panels of the third section, and so on. Pin and baste the panels as the skirt lies flat. Pin at top and bottom first.

If there is a pleated section or a center box pleat, this should be made complete while the skirt or waist is still in one section and before it is assembled into the dress. Finish the pleats complete and press them flat. If there are any intricate seams, such as pointed yokes or inset pleats, it may be advisable to set them in from the right side. (See rules for right-side basting.)

Any bias section that may sag when worn (such as a bias skirt gore) should be pressed along the bias edge before assembling, stretching while pressing to remove the firmness of the dressing that will later disappear and cause

sagging. This procedure will bring the material into its natural sagging position for final basting and stitching. The edge can then be machine-stitched to hold it in place for basting, if so desired. It is unusual for a bias panel to be stitched to a straight edge, but if the design calls for such an arrangement, it is advisable to select firmly woven material and follow the method here described for accurate results.

And, by the way, it is never advisable to make wash fabrics into bias-cut sections. The fabric will stretch into a different shape each time it is washed and ironed, and unless the goods is firmly woven and preshrunk, the results may be disappointing. This same advice is true when making bias tucks or pleats on loosely woven material. When new, the garment may be pleasing; but after washing the pleats will each stretch in a different direction and thus the desired effect may be ruined.

Place all bias sections uppermost for basting and the straighter sections on the bottom. Smooth the bias section along the straight threads of the goods so that the edge will be perfect for basting. Pin to position before basting, placing the pins close to one another.

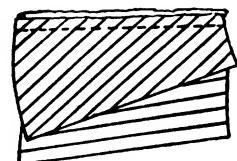
All back sections will be handled in like manner—basting all tucks and darts, making any pleated sections necessary and pressing them flat before joining them to the waist.

The front of the waist is basted to the front of the skirt, after matching the centers perfectly. The back is basted, matching the center of the waist to the center of the skirt back. The waistline is usually not changed; the fitting is done elsewhere. (See rules for fitting.) It is very important that centers should be notched and then matched carefully when assembled. Haphazard assembling of centers often produces a twisted effect. Notch centers of waistlines and also collars and collar lines. Pin the centers before basting. If a skirt appears to twist after centers have been matched, it may be that one hip is higher than the other. (See Chapter 32.)

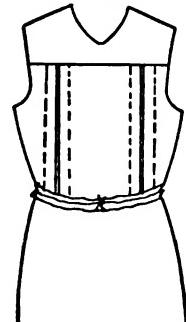
Use dressmaker's basting on all long seams, as it is quickly done and holds the material firmly in place with few stitches. Use fine, soft thread for basting. The stiff, heavy thread is more difficult to use and it knots easily. Do not use a long thread for basting. Long threads often snarl or break.

#### Wash fabrics

#### Bias on top



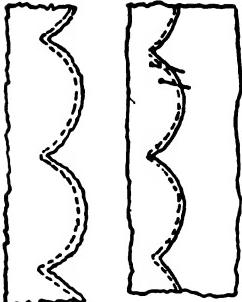
#### Joining the front



#### Basting

## ASSEMBLING THE DRESS

### Preparing seams



**Flat-stitching**

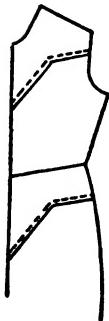
All intricate seams such as points and curves should be prepared before basting. (See section on points and angles.) If the joining seam is a decided curve, machine-stitch the raw edge below the sewing line and toward the raw edge. This stitching will hold the curve in shape but should not be visible when finished.

When the seam is quite unruly when basted from the wrong side, turn it to the right side, fold under the edge, pin to the correct position, and baste it from the right side with a slipstitch. (See rules for right-side basting.) This procedure will perfect the most difficult seam.

If the seam is to be flat-stitched, it should first be stitched from the wrong side before stitching from the right side. The first stitching will make a firm seam and thus will make a flatter line for the final stitching. The seam must be pressed after the first stitching. This pressing will eliminate any pouching and bulging in the seam and will give a perfect edge to follow for stitching on the wrong side. The thinner the fabric the closer to the edge the flat-stitching should be made.

When the dress is of the type to be flat-stitched, the yoke is flat-stitched to the skirt and to the waist rather than the waist flat-stitched to the yoke. The yoke overlaps the other sections. The seam is then pressed *under* the yoke to form the perfect edge for stitching, and the final stitching is made through the three thicknesses of material—both edges of the seam and the yoke. The seam is not pressed open unless it is flat-stitched on both sides.

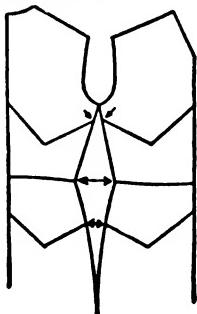
### Yokes



**When to flat-stitch**

All flat-stitching should be done before the side seams are joined, as it is very difficult to flat-stitch perfectly with the whole dress bundled under the arm of the machine. The tension should not be too tight when flat-stitching, as the stitch must be taken through three thicknesses of the material.

### Side seams



The front has now been basted complete and the back complete, and they have been joined at the waistline. The side seams are not basted. Lay the dress flat on the table and carefully match all intersecting lines at the side seams. This applies to the waistline and any possible yoke lines extending into the side seam. They must match perfectly on the right side. It may be necessary to turn the seam back on one side when pinning to place to see the sewing line of the matching side. Leave the left side open at the waist-

line for the placket when stitching, but it should be basted closed and press-marked on the sewing line.

Although the sleeves are set in last, they should be set into the dress before it is tried on. Baste all the sleeve sections together, matching the sleeve seams when the pattern is removed from the sleeve material. Double and pin so that the sleeves will not be made for the same arm.

Sleeves and armholes should be notched; but if notches have been forgotten, identify the front of the sleeve cap by the more curved edge.

Saddle shoulders and all sleeves extending into the neck will be basted into the dress to join the shoulders. The set-in sleeve will be basted *after* the shoulder seam is joined.

The shoulder seam is always basted with the back of the dress uppermost, as the back seam is usually a trifle longer than the front shoulder seam due to the curve of the shoulders. The fuller portion of any material is held uppermost for basting. Pin both ends of the seam at the sewing line and at the center and it will be unimportant whether the basting is started from the neck or from the arm. The back must be uppermost with the small part of the seam held on top.

If the dress is to be tried on without a sleeve, it is advisable to machine-stitch around the curve of the arm before it is tried on. If this is not done, the curve will stretch and the sleeve may then not fit the armhole.

It is not necessary to baste on the collar for the first fitting unless so desired. The neck often must be changed in fitting, which will alter the neck curve. Baste in the trial hem, however. The dress will then have a much more pleasing appearance.

Press all seams to one side to mark for a perfect stitching line before stitching the dress after it is fitted. This is even more important than marking the sewing lines with a crease. Pressing will bring out all mistakes in basting and will give the perfect line for the last stitching. The side seams of the skirt will curve from the waist to the hips and cannot be pressed flat. They can be gradually drawn over the end of the ironing board while pressing; thus they retain the curved line. Side seams are usually straight from the hip-line to the hem.

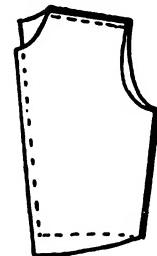
If the side seam is very narrow or if there will be a great strain upon it on thin material, it is advisable to stitch a narrow selvage of the goods into the seam as a stay.

Sleeves



Saddle shoulders

The shoulder seams



Staying the armhole

The collar

Stitching

Staying the seam

**Using good thread**

Stitch with good thread. The best is an economy. After spending many hours making a garment, it is discouraging to have a seam burst at the first wearing or to find the thread fading.

**QUESTIONS**

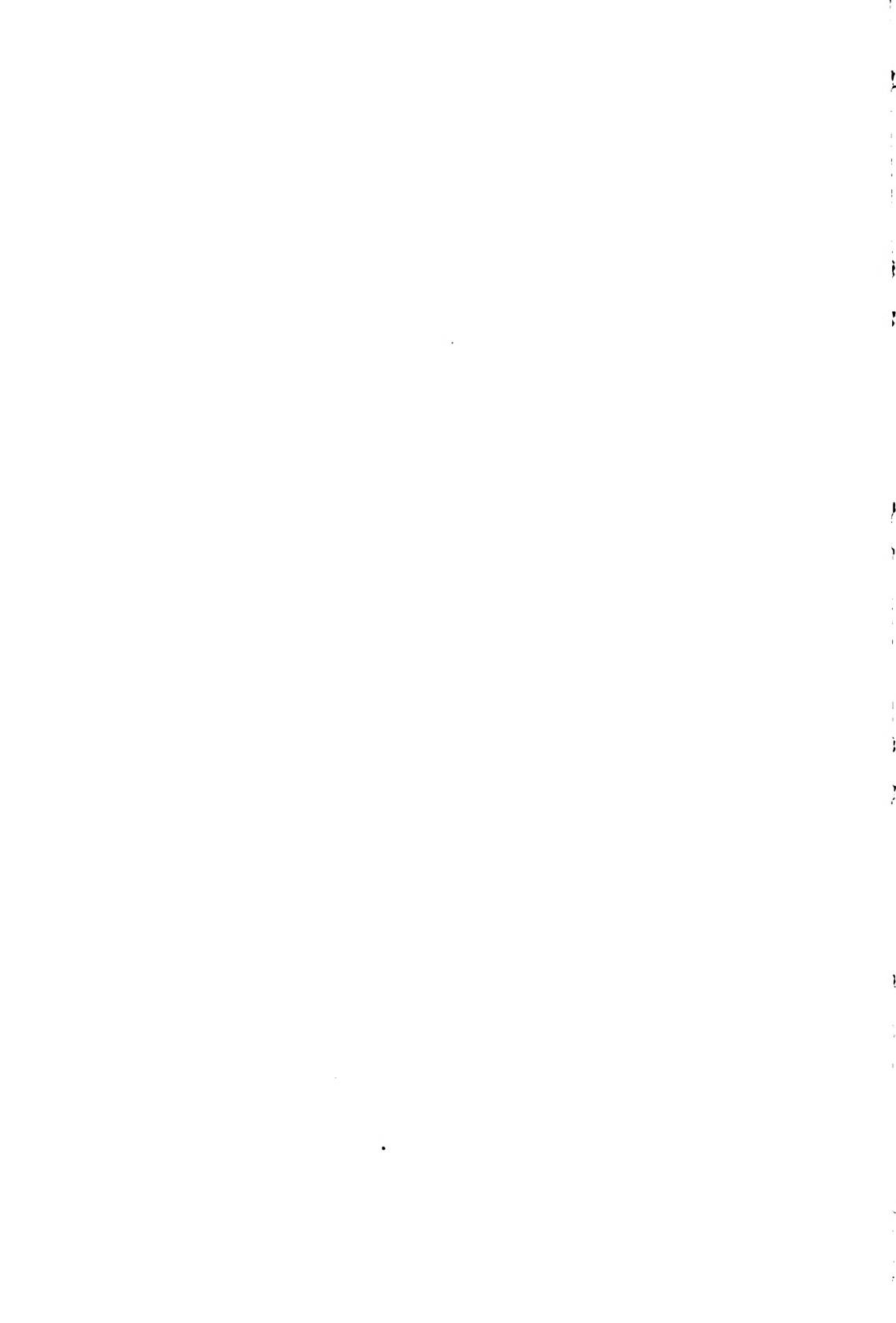
1. How are the sections grouped after they are cut?
2. When should the pattern be removed from the goods?
3. What is done with the scraps? Why?
4. What should be done to sections reserved for a purpose?
5. How should sewing lines be marked?
6. How should corners be dealt with? When?
7. When are the darts and tucks made, and how are they marked?
8. How are the center lines marked?
9. When are tailored or bound buttonholes made?
10. What should be done to two-section fronts or backs?
11. How should sections of skirts be joined?
12. Why should sections be pinned first?
13. How should long seams be basted?
14. What section is placed on top?
15. What kind of basting is used? Why?
16. What kind of thread is used?
17. What size needle is used?
18. What should be done to all intricate seams?
19. What is done to curves before basting?
20. If seam is unruly, what should be done?
21. How are flat-stitched seams made?
22. How is seam prepared for flat-stitching?
23. How many thicknesses of material does the stitching hold?
24. When is flat-stitching done?
25. How should tensions be gauged?
26. Is dress flat-stitched to the yoke?
27. How is the front of waist assembled?
28. How is the front of skirt assembled?
29. How is the back section of the waist basted?
30. How is the back section of the skirt basted?
31. When are they joined at the waistline?
32. When is a set-in sleeve basted in?
33. When are pleated sections made?
34. When is the side seam joined?
35. How does the dress lie when basting?
36. How are intersecting lines matched?
37. When is shoulder seam basted?
38. How is it held when basting? Why is this necessary?
39. From which end is the basting started?

40. Should sleeve be basted in before trying on the dress? If not, what should be done?
41. Is it necessary to baste on the collar?
42. When should the hem be basted in?
43. How are the seams straightened for stitching?
44. What can be done to stay narrow seams?
45. Why should good thread be used?



**PART III**

**Waist Finishing**



## CHAPTER II

### Buttonholes and Tailored Loops

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#### BUTTONHOLES

Buttonholes and buttons often form the only trimming of a tailored garment and furnish that necessary center of interest so desired in smart clothes; simplicity is often more effective than an amateurish attempt at designing.

A sample buttonhole should be made on every different fabric used, as materials handle differently, some requiring an extra stay, some different types of bindings. The sample will solve the problem and accustom one to making buttonholes in the particular material.

Buttonholes are usually made along the straight thread of the material. They are cut exactly the size of the button and no larger. Loosely woven material requires a stay under the buttonhole. Bound buttonholes are seldom made less than one inch in length; smaller buttons are held in place with tailored loops made of cloth, thread-crocheted loops, or thread-worked buttonholes. Thread-worked buttonholes should be used on all wash garments.

Bound buttonholes are the trimming type and are easily made after a little practice. The corded type is especially easy to make after one becomes experienced. A cording foot for the sewing machine is necessary. The plain, bound buttonhole as shown here will be easier for the amateur; the cord can be placed inside the fold after the scrap is stitched and pressed to position.

Bound buttonholes are made *before* the garment is assembled and before the facing is applied. Thread-made buttonholes are made *after* the facing is applied and after the garment is finished.

Various methods are employed in making bound buttonholes. If corded buttonholes are desired, then follow the



Where buttonholes  
are made

Bound buttonholes

When buttonholes  
are made

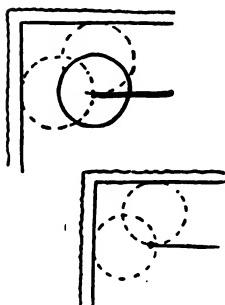
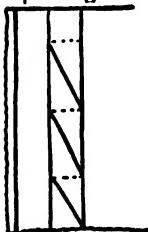
Different methods

## BUTTONHOLES AND TAILORED LOOPS

instructions for cording. But if difficulty is encountered in making perfect ends in the buttonhole, then it is advised to bind the buttonhole with one scrap of material and baste in the cord along the fold.

**Marking**

**Do not guess at placing**

**Edge placement****Even spacing**

The pattern usually marks the line for the buttonhole, but when remodeling a garment plan to slash the buttonhole along the straight thread of material. If on a lapel, follow the straight thread of the goods when cutting rather than making the buttonhole at right angles to the edge. If it must be made on the bias, however, it is best to baste a straight piece of cotton material under the buttonhole before it is made.

Buttonholes should be carefully measured and marked before they are made. A crooked or poorly placed buttonhole is very noticeable and often ruins the appearance of the garment. There is a general rule for spacing buttons and buttonholes, and this rule should be followed. Do not guess at placing buttonholes.

The button will rest at the *end* of the buttonhole and not in the middle. The buttonhole will also be made on the garment before the facing is applied and a seam must be allowed at the edge. Press back the sewing line for marking until this rule becomes fully understood, otherwise the buttonhole *may* be cut too close to the edge of the dress.

After the edge seam is pressed back to mark the sewing line at the edge, place a button on the edge and mark back the width of the button, placing a pin at the mark. Then place the button at this pin and mark another button length for the length of the opening.

The shank of the button, or the threads that hold it in place, will take up an eighth-inch on all but large buttons. Add this eighth-inch at the front of the buttonhole toward the edge seam. This will make the opening one-eighth inch larger than the button. Very large buttons will require a quarter-inch for the shank.

A row of buttonholes should be evenly spaced and on an even line from the edge. Mark the first and the last buttonhole in the row. Place the material on a table, and with a ruler mark a straight line down the front edge of the row and also down the back edge of the two marked buttonholes. Follow the chalk mark with loose machine stitching.

Buttons are spaced evenly, unless placed in even groups.

The general rule for spacing dress buttons is to space them twice the width of the button apart. This rule will vary on mannish tailored blouses on which the buttons are small and spaced farther apart.

Cut a strip of paper the length of the space between the top and bottom button. Mark on the paper twice the width of the button to be used. Make two circles touching the buttonhole spaces. Now fold up this strip of paper into equal width the length of the spacing as marked. Enlarge the space but do not reduce it. Crease the paper firmly, open it up, and pin it to the row. Place a pin opposite each crease as marked. Each buttonhole placement is then basted. This basting will be followed on the wrong side for stitching.

Loosely woven material should be stayed for buttonholes. Baste a bias strip of material to the back of the row. The long line of stitching on the sides of the row should be made through this stay if needed. The basting thread across the buttonhole will then be made through the stay. After the buttonhole scrap is pinned or basted to place on the right side, the stitching around the buttonhole will be made with the stay side held uppermost on the machine. Follow the center basted line.

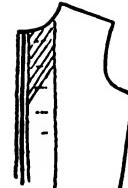
Corded buttonholes are easy to make when a cording foot is available. It is often impossible to purchase a cording foot for some sewing machines, but one can be easily made from an unused attachment that fits the particular machine.

File off all the attachment from the foot section, then file off the left prong of the foot leaving the right prong to make the cording foot. The cord can then be placed close to the needle when sewing.

Baste a heavy cotton cord into a long bias fold of matching material. Machine-stitch close to the cord. Trim off the seam allowance to one-eighth inch width, the full length of the corded strip. Mark with chalk or machine-stitch the line for both ends of the buttonhole; mark each cross line with a basting thread. Machine-stitch the cord to the material with the cut edge of the corded strip close to the center line of the buttonhole. Clip off the cord. Allow one-quarter inch at each end of the buttonhole. Stitch the cord to the other edge. Turn to the wrong side. Clip at the center of the basted line and to each point at the corners of the buttonhole. Push the cord through the opening,

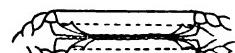
### Marking the row

### Staying the buttonhole



### Corded buttonholes

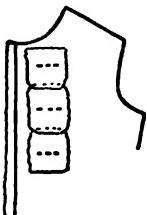
### Cording strip



## BUTTONHOLES AND TAILORED LOOPS

edges meeting. Hand-tack the ends to the point of the clipped section. Machine-stitch across both ends catching all threads at the corners.

### Bound buttonholes

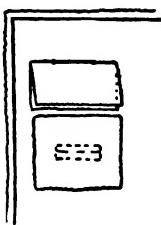


Bound buttonholes can easily be made with one scrap of material. The strips for the binding are generally made of the same material as the garment and can be cut on the lengthwise, crosswise, or bias. The bias and crosswise may make a more attractive trimming, but the lengthwise will make the firm edge and will be easier to handle.

Each strip should be cut separately, as one continuous strip will make each section too small. Large separate sections must not overlap the next buttonhole.

Cut the scraps as wide as possible, at least one inch longer and two inches wider than the finished buttonhole. It does not pay to skimp on the size of the material used. The larger scrap will work much easier than the smaller scrap. It will be trimmed off after it is finished.

### Applying

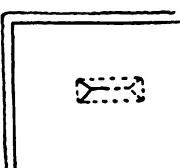


It is customary for dressmakers to make all the buttonholes, then baste on all the scraps, then stitch them all, then slash them all, turn them all, and finish. Do not finish one at a time.

After all the buttonholes are marked through to the reverse side, the binding material is ready to apply. If the material has a definite line on the lengthwise thread, all the scraps should be pressed down the center on this line.

Apply this scrap to the chalk mark and basted line on the *right* side of the garment, matching the fold of the crease to the basted line, placing it exactly in the center of the line with an equal amount extending at each end. Pin to place carefully with several pins. The pins will hold it for stitching.

### Stitching



Turn to the wrong side with the scraps down on the machine. The basted lines will now be followed on each side. Start stitching on the side of the center of one of the lines and not at the point. Stitch one-eighth inch from the edge. (It is advisable for the amateur to practice on large buttonholes with a quarter-inch of stitching from the line until the rules are learned.)

Stitch to the end of the line, keeping an even width from the center. When the end is reached, lower the needle into the goods, lift the presser foot, and turn the goods. Lower the presser foot and *count* the stitches across the end. The narrower the buttonhole is made, the more professional

it will look when made correctly. Four stitches are usually sufficient unless the larger practice buttonhole is being made.

After the end is stitched, turn the corner as before and stitch down the other side, keeping an even distance from the center. Turn the third corner and count the stitches of equal number on the other end. Overlap the stitching when the end is reached. If the material is loosely woven, stitch around the second time closely. Check to determine if the straight thread of material was followed on the right side of the material. Remove the bastings or pins and fold back the scrap to be sure that the thread is straight before slashing the opening. After the buttonhole is cut it cannot be changed; a remade buttonhole is always larger and longer.

After the buttonhole has been checked, slash the center mark with sharp-pointed scissors along the basting. Start to cut at the center of the line and not at the end. The end must be clipped into a V-shaped section to be used later to hold the buttonhole together.

Clip from the center, slash to each of the corners at the end of the line, but be sure not to clip the stitching. If it should accidentally be clipped, be sure to restitch it before turning.

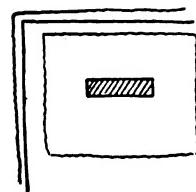
The binding is now ready to pull through to the wrong side, drawing out the corners. Have the iron ready and press *open the opening into a rectangle*. *Be sure to press the corners perfect.*

Each edge of the binding will now be pressed to *shape*. This will eliminate the basting and will perfect the line. The seam remains on the outside of the binding. Bring one side of the binding up to fill exactly half of the space; fold back and press. Lift the other side to fill the remaining space and press back. If the pressing has been made even, the lines will be perfect and there will be two tiny inverted box pleats at the end of each line. Moisture should be used for pressing when possible.

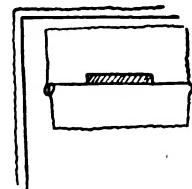
Lift the box pleat and stitch it to the point with the binding side down on the machine. This completes the buttonhole until the facing is applied. The edges can be caught to the seam if so desired. The edges are then trimmed off. The buttonhole is not stitched around the edges from the right side.

### Checking

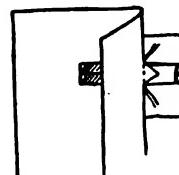
### Clipping open and turning



### Pressing to shape

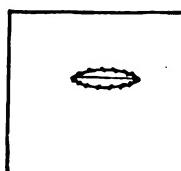


### Stitching the end



## BUTTONHOLES AND TAILORED LOOPS

### The facing finish



#### Clipping from the right side

The buttonhole is made free from the facing. The facing is later finished to the buttonhole. Press the finished buttonhole flat and trim off the extra width of binding. After the facing is stitched on and the edge seam is pressed open, it is basted to the dress at the edge and around the buttonhole.

### Lapel buttonholes

After the facing is basted over the opening, it is clipped through from the right side. It is then turned to the wrong side and clipped to the end of the buttonhole. Push under the raw edges with the needle and catch to the buttonhole as far back as the binding at the center. Graduate to a point at the end.

If the buttonhole is on a lapel where it will be visible from both the right and the wrong side, the facings must be finished with square corners, clipping the ends to two points as in the binding. Push under the slipstitch to the buttonhole on the exact sewing line, using small stitches, then press.

### Needle and thread buttonholes

Buttonholes made with thread and needle are made *after* the facing is applied. The edges are held together with machine stitching *before* the opening is cut with buttonhole scissors. The opening is cut through both the facing and the dress. Use heavy thread. Start the thread at the far end of the buttonhole. Start sewing at the lower edge of the right hand side, loop the thread to the left and hold down with the thumb. Take the stitch through the slash, and through the loop. Draw the thread *outward* and toward the *back*, not toward you.

Continue in a curve around the front end and along the other edge. Finish with bar tacking.

## TAILORED LOOPS

### Uses for loops

Loops of material are often used for buttonholes, especially for coat closings and for small buttons on slashed openings such as the back of the neck or wrists of the sleeve. They are placed quite close together in groups and are made without cord when used on dresses. The seam allowance on the side of the stitched bias will form the filling when the strip is turned.

### Material

Loops are made from the same material as the garment. They are cut on a true bias with a selvage across one end

if possible, the width depending upon the weight of the material. The thinner the material the smaller the loop will be made, unless a wide seam is allowed for a filler. The finished loop should be round like a cord and not flat; this will require a complete filling of the turned cord with the seam.

The width of the seam allowance will also depend upon its use. It is advisable to make a sample to determine the desired width of the finished loop and also to determine the necessary width of the seam with which to fill it. If too much seam has been allowed or the seam has been stitched too narrow, it will be very difficult if not impossible to turn. Thin material will require a wide seam allowance, but a narrow width stitched for the cord; while coating will require a narrow seam and a wider space stitched for the cord.

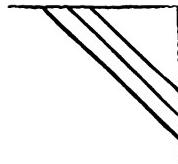
Cut a true bias strip of the proper length, for there must be no joining seams. Cut several strips if necessary, but do not sew them together. If several loops are to be made it is advisable to cut one long strip of true bias. (See rules for cutting true bias.) Gauge the width of the folded edge, watching the space between the needle and the folded edge.

Baste the bias strip double before it is stitched. Keeping the bias folded even will prevent the loops from twisting. After one becomes experienced it will not be necessary to baste the strip, but the amateur should baste at all times.

Prepare to stitch. If there is more than one presser foot for the machine, use one that permits seeing close to the needle. Gauge the width of the stitching from the needle to the folded edge.

*Stitch slowly and stretch the bias, pulling from both ends while stitching.* If the material is not stretched when it is stitched, the threads of the stitching will break when the strain is placed upon them when it is turned. The line of stitching must be straight along the fold edge as this width will control the width of the loop. If the fold is too wide, it can be restitched over the first stitching. The seam will appear much wider after stitching, as the width reduces when stretched. Test the correct width with a sample turned and completed.

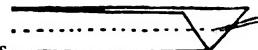
When the folded bias has been stitched correctly, slide a bodkin into the end with the selvage and sew the eye of



Seam allowance

#### Stitching

#### Stitching the loop



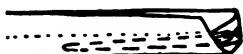
Turning the strip

## BUTTONHOLES AND TAILORED LOOPS

the bodkin to the point of the folded selvage. The selvage prevents the threads from pulling out when the bodkin is pulled through.

The bodkin will now be *inside* of the loop ready to pull the seam through it. The thread must be firm and tacked to the bodkin securely so that the thread will not break.

### Pulling the bodkin through

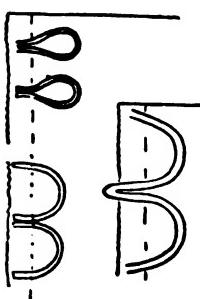


### Coat loops

Pull the bodkin through the stitched fold, gradually working off the material from the head of the bodkin. It may be difficult to start if the goods is bunched at the head of the bodkin. A good loop will pull hard, for it must be closely packed, but it should not be too tight. If the first cord does not pull through, try again with a wider opening or a narrower seam. If it is too thin, make a wider seam allowance and stitch narrower. A little practice will make perfect, and the results are quite thrilling.

Loops for coats should be reinforced with a cord or tape, or a narrow selvage might be pulled through the loop. After the bias material has been cut, stitched, and turned, the bodkin is then slid into the turned loop and the cord or tape is sewed to the eye of the bodkin. The cord is pulled through with the bodkin. The loop can then be stitched into the coat seam; or, if there is no seam on the edge, the long ends can be twisted into a snail and can be slipstitched and tacked to the edge of the coat. The loop should protrude at the edge.

### Applying the loops



Loops are applied to an unfinished seam. The ends of the loops must be caught in the stitching when the facing is applied. Therefore it is necessary to stitch a colored line for the ending of the loops as they will all be of equal length. The final stitching of the facing to the dress will follow the colored line from the visible side of the seams.

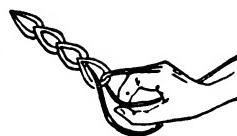
The seam should be quite narrow, as loops are usually used on a slashed opening. Baste a line down the seam at the edge of the stitching for the facing. This will be about a one-eighth-inch seam. All the loops will be tacked to place just below this line so that the basting need not be removed. Loops are basted with the ends outward and the loops toward the garment.

Loops can be applied in any one of three methods. Each loop can be clipped off and with the ends held together can be basted to the seam (see illustration). Or the loops can be applied in one continuous strip with the loops spread out and the sides of the joining loop touching (see illus-

tration). Or each loop can be clipped off and sewed to place with ends touching the next loop.

Buttonholes are often made with buttonhole twist, especially when just one button is used to close an opening. The loops are used both for a closing and for a trimming. They are made with a fine crochet hook—or the dressmaker often makes them with her fingers (see lesson on belt loops). Catch the end of the thread to the wrong side of the dress. Pull through a loop with the hook and crochet a loop and catch to the goods. The thread should match the material perfectly.

### Thread loops



## QUESTIONS

### Bound Buttonholes

1. When are buttonholes made?
2. Are they made through facings?
3. What length are they made?
4. On what thread of material are they cut?
5. If made on the bias thread, what should be done?
6. What is the rule for placing buttonholes?
7. How far back from the edge should buttonholes be placed?
8. What line is used from which to measure?
9. How is a corner buttonhole measured?
10. When making a row, what two buttonholes are marked first?
11. How far apart are they spaced?
12. How is a row spaced after the first two are marked?
13. How are they marked, on wrong or right side? Why?
14. Are buttonholes stayed? When?
15. On what side are they stitched?
16. How is the mark placed through to the wrong side?
17. How is most successful binding cut?
18. How is the binding prepared? Why? On which side of the garment is it placed?
19. How is the binding stitched; where started and ended?
20. How are perfect points made?
21. How are the end stitches perfectly matched?
22. If threads are clipped, what must be done?
23. What is the next important step, usually omitted?
24. How is each side then handled?
25. What is done with the side seams of the buttonhole?
26. Where is the end stitching made?
27. When is the buttonhole trimmed off?
28. How are wash buttonholes handled?
29. How are the buttonholes in facings marked?

30. How are they finished?
31. How is a lapel buttonhole made?
32. When are thread buttonholes made?
33. How are the edges held in place?
34. Where is the thread started?
35. How is the thread held?
36. How is the thread drawn down?

### Tailored Loops

1. When are tailored loops made?
2. Of what material are they made?
3. How is the material cut and how wide?
4. What thread of the goods is used?
5. Is it used for a filler? Of what is it formed?
6. What should be cut at the end of each strip?
7. Can the strips be joined together?
8. Should the strips be basted? Why?
9. What prevents the loops from twisting?
10. What is watched when gauging for the stitching?
11. What is done to the bias when stitching? Why?
12. How is the bodkin inserted; from which end?
13. What part is watched on the bodkin when pulling?
14. How are coat loops made?
15. How are they attached?
16. What are the three methods of attaching dress loops?
17. What line is necessary to mark for applying?
18. How are continuous loops applied?
19. How are separate loops applied?
20. How is the finish applied?
21. When are the ends trimmed off?
22. How is the facing finished down? How are thread loops made?
23. Where are they used?

## CHAPTER 12

### Buttons and Fastenings

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Garments for men and for women close on opposite sides. Women's garments close to the left and men's close to the right.

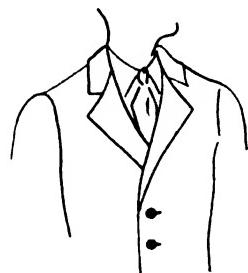
This custom, which has continued throughout the ages, originated in the days when garments were held closed with the hands. The woman held her baby in her left arm and wrapped her mantle around it, leaving her right hand free to carry a burden. The man carried his weapon on his left hip and wrapped his mantle to the right so as to have his right hand free quickly to reach his weapon. Hence, the woman's garments have continued to lap to the left and the man's to the right. All little girls' and little boys' clothes are also buttoned according to this rule.

Back openings in dresses follow the same rule, the right side lapping to the left. Buttonholes are on the right and buttons on the left of the opening, right and left sides being determined by the right and left arms on the figure, not as viewed from the back. Belts are closed in like manner; a woman's belt buckle is placed on the left side and a man's on the right side.

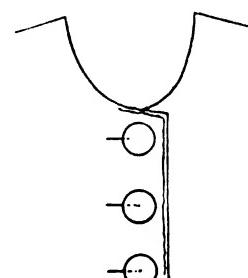
The smartness of the garment depends upon the correct placement of the buttons and buttonholes. Crude spacing denotes amateurish efforts and produces a homemade effect. A row of tailored buttonholes and buttons is often the only trimming on the garment, and they should be spaced carefully.

If there are to be both buttons and bound buttonholes, the buttonholes are made first and the marks for placement of the buttons will be made through the buttonhole when the sides are overlapped flat on a table. The pin can be placed

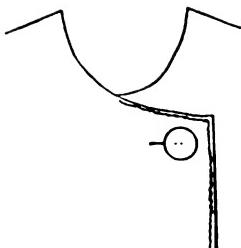
**Men and women's garments close on opposite sides**



**Spacing**



## BUTTONS AND FASTENINGS



### Measuring from the edge

firmly when the buttonholes are removed. Make the mark for the button at the front end of the buttonhole.

The same rule for spacing applies to buttons as to the buttonholes except that the *center* of the button will be marked rather than the end, as in the buttonhole. The center of the button will rest at the end of the buttonhole.

Press back a seam allowance at the edge of the garment for the finish allowance.

### The shank of the button

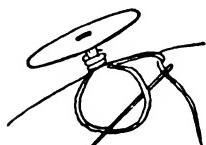


The shank of the button connects the button with the cloth. The thicker the cloth of the buttonhole, the longer the shank should be made. Some buttons are made with a metal shank, while thread must make the shank on others. All buttons that are used to hold a buttonhole should be sewed to the garment with a thread shank, as the tight stitching without the shank produces a drawing around the buttonhole. The button with a large shank requires that the buttonhole be placed closer to the edge.

To make a thread shank, place a bar across the top of the button under the first thread. Use a pin, a needle, a darning needle, or a match, depending on the depth of the shank desired. The match is used for men's coats. This crossbar holds the thread away from the button when sewing; when it is removed, this space will be under the button.

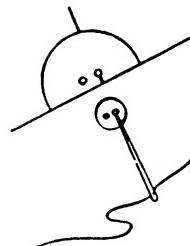
Take one stitch to hold the button in place and slide the pin or match under the thread on top of the button. Take as many stitches as will be necessary to hold on the button, then remove the bar and pass the needle through the button on top of the goods on the right side of the garment. Wrap the thread around the threads under the button and then tack. When the thread is tacked, it will hold closer if each thread is knotted in the following manner. After the loop is made, pass the needle through the loop and draw it up. Make three such knots before *cutting* off the thread. Do not break the thread or the last two knots will loosen.

### Making the shank



Coat buttons are often reinforced with a second button sewed on the under side. This procedure will prevent the outer button from pulling out the material. The button can then be sewed through both the lining and the material, otherwise the button is sewed through only one thickness of the goods. Follow the same method in sewing on the top button, placing a bar across the top of the button to make the thread shank under the button.

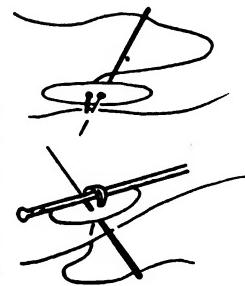
Coat buttons



Buttons sewed to a heavy coat without the small button on the wrong side must be sewed to place without the stitches going through the facing.

Men's buttons

Use heavy thread for heavy material. Linen thread should be used for men's coats. Take a stitch on the right side of the coat where the button will be placed, then run the needle through the button and down to the under side of the button. Take a small stitch on the goods under the button to hold it in place. Slide a match under this thread and over the button.



Hold the coat over the finger with the button to one side of the button. Take a stitch up and over the button and down over the bar, then take one stitch *across* the goods under the button but do not catch the facing. Repeat this stitch until a sufficient number of threads are over the button to hold it in place.

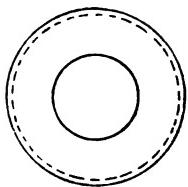
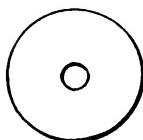
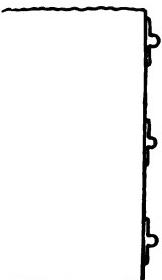
Remove the match and pass the needle through to the under side of the button. Wrap the thread around the threads under the button and tack as directed.

Buttons can be covered either by machine or by hand. Most department stores will direct their customers to a reliable firm that offers this service. Material for the covering must accompany the order, as these buttons are made of matching materials. Small scraps of material are sufficient, as only small circles are cut for the coverings.

Covered buttons

Molds for these buttons are furnished by the firm that makes the buttons; they offer various shapes and sizes. Such buttons are often used on tailored dresses made of satins and woolens. Heavy plain crepe is also trimmed with tailored buttons. They are used as a trimming, being placed close together on slashed openings on necks and sleeves, on a collar or front closing, or in a close row down the sleeve or front. Covered buttons are often made very small and close with tailored loops.

## BUTTONS AND FASTENINGS

**Hand-covered buttons****When to use snaps****Marking****Hooks and eyes**

A few larger buttons can be covered by hand. Cut a circle of material more than twice the width of the button. Run a gathering thread around it, making the gathered circle larger than the button. Place the button in the center with the rounded side next to the cloth and draw up the thread. The ends of the cloth should be sufficiently long to hold in the hand as a stem.

Sew back and forth across the under side of the button, gradually turning it until all the gathered portion is held firmly in place with stitches. Do not run the thread *over* the raw edges. This will be trimmed off later. When the stitching is firm, trim off the ends flush with the button and tack.

Snap fasteners are used for invisible closings and are used on openings that have no strain. A waist may be closed at the side with snaps, but if there is no belt to relieve the strain there should be a hook and eye at the waistline.

Snaps are made in several sizes in both black and white. They are placed close to the finished edge, usually with the socket section on top.

Spaces for the snaps should be marked before sewing to place. The stem part is sewed on first, placing pins for the marks. Place the end snaps and then fill in the space evenly as closely as necessary.

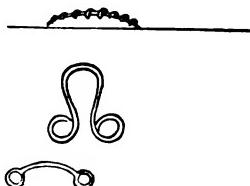
The thread is sewed over the sides, two stitches in each opening. Sew with heavy thread. Bring the needle up from under the snap at each opening. Tack securely, slide the needle back and forth under the snap, then cut off the thread with scissors. Breaking the thread permits the threads to start slipping at the first strain on the snap.

After all of the stem sections are sewed to place, place the placket flat on the table and rub over the stem sections of the snaps with tailor's chalk. Press down the stems hard against the matching seam and each matching placket placement will be marked perfectly. Quickly place a pin on each small chalk mark before it disappears.

The hook is placed on the top part of the seam and is sewed back from the edge, making it invisible. It is sewed

to place around the ends of the hook and the top is held to place with stitches. If several hooks are used, a small piece of ribbon can be slipped over the stitches for a finish.

Two types of eyes can be used: one is metal with a straight bar and the other metal with a curved bar. The thread loop is made like a bar tack (see lesson on belts), or it may be buttonholed over the thread.

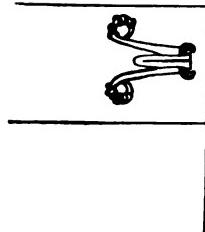


Covered weights are used on cowl necklines. Otherwise they are seldom used in modern garments; for if a garment fits correctly, it is not necessary to hold it in place with weights.

The weight for a cowl neck is covered with matching material. Sew up a long fold the size of the weight and four inches long. Turn the fold and slide the weight into it. Tack it to place and then tack the end of the fold to the collarline of the dress. The weight will drop and hold the collar down. The folds of the cowl are tacked to the material of the covering.

The woman with sloping shoulders finds it difficult to hold her lingerie straps in place. She will find that a pattern for the built-up shoulder or the shaped shoulder will be helpful. The straps must also be attached closer to the center front and the center back of the garments for this type of figure.

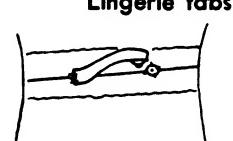
Lingerie tabs are also very helpful. Use ribbon seam binding or a folded selvage, two inches long. Sew the loose end to the dress shoulder seam and the fold end will have a snap sewed to it. The matching section of the snap will be sewed to the dress. The straps will slide under the tab.



**Use of weights**



**Lingerie**



**Lingerie tabs**

## QUESTIONS

1. Do women's garments close to the right or left?
2. Do men's garments close to the right or left?
3. Do children's clothes close to the right or left?
4. How do back openings close?

5. Which is first, making buttonholes or placing the buttons?
6. How is the button placed in relation to the buttonhole?
7. Does the same rule for spacing apply to buttons as to buttonholes? What is the rule?
8. Should the space be widened or narrowed?
9. What is the shank of the button?
10. Can a thread shank be made?
11. On what does the depth of the shank depend?
12. What kind of button should be sewed to a garment with a shank? Why?
13. How is a thread shank made?
14. What is used to gauge the depth of the shank?
15. How is the bar used?
16. How is a coat button often reinforced?
17. How is a button sewed when there is a facing?
18. How are buttons covered? When are they used?
19. How are buttons covered by hand? How large is the scrap cut?
20. How is it gathered, drawn up to fit, and tacked?
21. When are snaps used?
22. What is used at the waistline on a placket?
23. Which section of a snap is sewed on first?
24. How is the mark made for the other section?
25. Where is the hook placed?
26. How are several hooks covered?
27. What type of eyes can be used?
28. How are thread eyes made?
29. What are covered weights used for? How are they covered?
30. How are shoulder straps held on the garment for sloping shoulders?
31. What are lingerie tabs? How are they made?

## CHAPTER 13

### Bias Binding

A binding is an edge finish that is rolled over the edge without turning under the seam. It is visible on both the right and wrong side. It is used as a finish on necks and sleeves when no collars or cuffs are to be attached. It is also used to finish sections of the garment such as collars, cuffs, and hems.

Facings are edge finishes that are turned back at the seam and are only visible on one side of the garment.

A false binding is a small tuck taken on the wrong side of a straight edge. This tuck is used as the seam when the raw edge is folded over and finished down as a binding.

Professional bias bindings are narrow. The narrower the binding, the smarter the appearance. Sheer fabric should be finished with very narrow binding. If matching material will not make a narrow binding on heavy material, it is best to make the binding of thinner fabric.

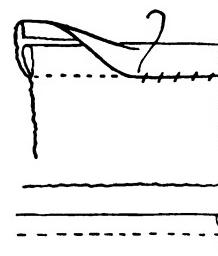
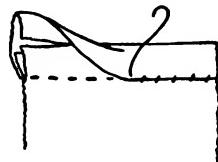
An edge is either bound or faced complete; it is never partly bound and partly faced. If the neckline is partially covered with a collar, the collar must be faced back, which will necessitate facing the complete neckline. The neck and sleeve finishes should also harmonize.

All binding should be made narrow, never wider than one-quarter inch when finished. An eighth of an inch is even more desirable. One-eighth inch is used on sheer fabrics. The narrower the binding, the smarter the edge finish. Wide bindings are amateurish and give a noticeable homemade effect.

Bias should always be cut on a *true* bias. Any variation from this rule ruins the effect. A true bias is the diagonal line across the straight threads of the fabric, joining two lines made at right angles along the lengthwise and crosswise threads, with the lines being of even length. It could be represented by a diagonally folded handkerchief.

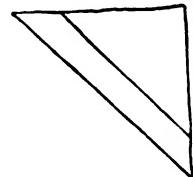
A "near bias" or a "long bias" is the diagonally cut mate-

Binding versus facing



Binding rules

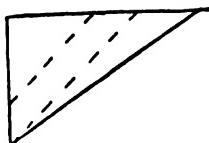
How to cut



## BIAS BINDING

rial, but it is not a true bias. It is often incorrectly used for the true bias. Better results will be secured if this long bias is cut into shorter strips of true bias and seamed together. The stretching properties are not the same on the near bias and it gives a poor effect.

### **Marking the bias**

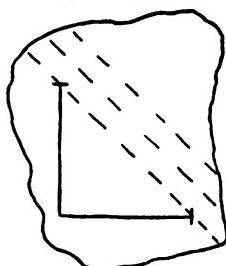


### **Cutting 'round and 'round**

It is unnecessary to use long strips for bias binding; smaller strips can be used to advantage and the larger pieces may be saved for possible use later. Straighten the material on the table, and, if of a sheer fabric, pin it to a paper, straightening along the lengthwise and crosswise threads of the fabric. Use tailor's chalk for marking, and mark the lines in long dashes. A continuous line cannot be chalk-marked on thin material without ruffling the goods.

Cut bias carefully if the right effect is desired later. If a large section of true bias is available, it can be seamed together along the straight edge, making a circle of the goods. Cut with the scissor-cutting guide that can be slipped over the point of the scissors.

### **Finding a true bias**

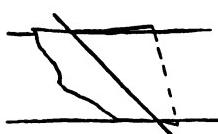


### **Double and single binding**

To find a true bias on an odd-shaped section of fabric, chalk-mark a four-inch line along the crosswise threads, then from one end of this line and at a right angle to it, chalk-mark a four-inch line along the lengthwise thread. Then chalk-mark a line joining the two open ends of the line. Continue this line to the outside edges of the scrap and *a true bias is secured* for cutting. If the material is sheer, pin to a paper or magazine for marking. It is advisable to use tailor's chalk, marking strips of even width for cutting.

Double binding is easier to apply than single. The double binding is cut one and a quarter inch wide (for the amateur). The more experienced sewer can cut it one inch wide. It is easier for the beginner to stitch a wider seam when sewing the binding to the dress and then trim off the seam before turning. Double binding can be used on thin material such as silks or thin cottons. Single binding is cut three-quarters of an inch wide—a trifle wider for the beginner; it is used on heavier material.

### **Trimming the ends**



When scraps are used to cut bias, the ends are not always on a straight thread of material, which is necessary for correct joining. If the material is striped, all the stripes should run in the same direction; and if the stripe is on a diagonal, the lines should be cut the same.

To match crooked seam-ends of bias, overlap the stripes

so that they will be placed in one long line. Slide the scissors under the two overlapped ends and cut along the straight thread of the goods. Discard the scraps. The two ends will now be perfectly matched.

There is a trick in joining bias so that the edge will be straight after they are joined together. Place the strips together at right angles on the seam. *Make a wide seam and match the pieces at the sewing line and not at the edge.* This line will be at the center of the small point made when the two pieces are placed at right angles to each other. When the strips are opened, the outer line will be straight if the pieces are of even width.

It is advisable to stitch a wide joining seam as the seam must be pressed open and trimmed back later. It is impossible to press open a narrow seam.

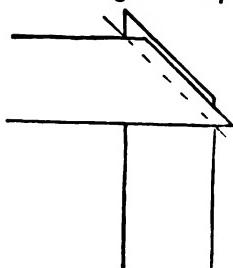
When there are several strips to be joined for the binding, stitch continuously, stitching two strips together. Just as they leave the presser foot, slide two more strips under the foot for stitching. Be sure that the right side of the strip is used. After the seam leaves the machine, it can be clipped apart. All the seams are then pressed open.

The joining seam of bias binding should be sufficiently wide to be pressed open. After it is pressed, trim the seam to one-eighth inch. A double binding is easy to make and apply and is used on sheer fabrics. Press the joined strip with a center fold, stretching slightly while pressing to eliminate a twisted effect. Baste the double fold of binding to the garment. When stitching to place, watch the space between the folded edge and the machine needle, not the cut edge. Trim uneven edges to an even width, making the seam less than one-quarter inch in width. Then roll the folded edge over the seam and slipstitch to place, catching the machine stitching.

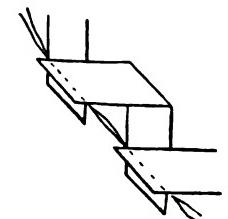
Sheer material should be stitched around the neckline and then tested to determine if it lies flat before the binding is applied. The tension should be rather loose so that the thread can easily be removed after the binding is stitched to place.

When binding a continuous circle such as a neckline, start the binding so that there will not be a joining seam of the binding at the center front. It is advisable to start binding

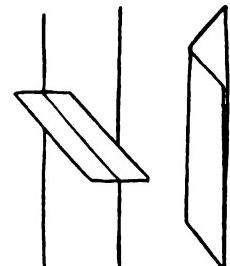
**Joining bias strips**



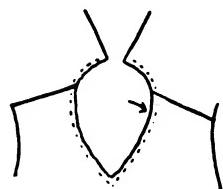
**Stitching continuously**

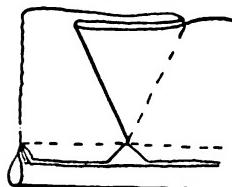
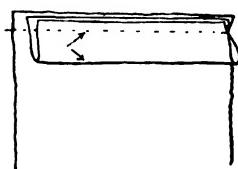


**Trimming and pressing**



**Machine-stitching the neck**



**BIAS BINDING****Pointed neckline****If the binding puckles****Attaching****Finishing a binding****Single binding**

at the left side of the neck below the shoulder seam. Plan the binding so that the joining seams will miss all seams of the dress. Stretch the binding slightly when basting to an inner curve such as the neck.

The ends of the binding must be joined correctly when binding a neck. The seam must be on the straight thread of the binding and not on the crosswise. Leave at least two inches loose when starting to apply the binding, and tack two inches before the end is reached.

Overlap the two ends, pin them together as they will be sewed, and then trim off. Baste together and test to determine if the bias is the correct length to fill the space. Then stitch the joining seam and baste to the dress.

If the neck is to be made into a point, such as a V-shaped neckline, the binding will be applied as a straight line. Graduate the width of the seam when approaching the point. Catch but two or three threads of the neckline at the point. The width of the binding seam remains uniform. After it is finished, the definite point will be made by holding the point together on the wrong side and tacking it by hand.

Do not depend upon removing puckers in binding by pressing. If it puckers when basted, it is twisted and will continue to pucker when finished. If it puckers, it must be ripped off and rebasted.

Puckered double binding is often the result of not using true bias or of doing a poor basting job. The binding should be basted for the first stitching. It is turned and finished down with a slipstitch by hand without basting.

When machine-stitching double binding to the dress, watch the space between the needle and the fold of the binding rather than the space between the needle and the raw edge. This is a universal error. It is more important to make the binding of uniform width than it is to make the seam even. The seam can be trimmed off before turning.

It is not necessary to baste down the second turning of a double binding if it is to be hand-finished. Trim off any loose threads and even the seam. Slipstitch the binding to place, sliding the needle into the fold of the binding and then catching a stitch of the machine-stitch. This method will make the threads invisible.

Single binding is used when the material is too heavy for the double binding. After the binding is stitched to the

edge, the seam is trimmed off to an even line as the hand finishing progresses, and the raw edge is pushed under with the needle point just before the edge is caught to the seam.

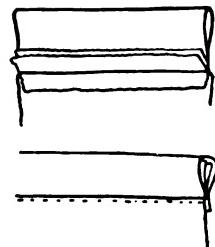
Double binding can be finished by machine if so desired, as in factory-made dresses. This binding must be cut wider than the hand-finished binding as it will extend beyond the seam.

There are two methods of finishing. One is to press open the seam after attaching the binding; the other is to push the seam into the binding. The folded edge of the binding is then rolled over the edge and basted.

If the seam is pressed open, the machine stitching is made in the seam itself. If the seam is pushed into the binding, the stitching is made below the seam, on the dress and not the binding. Baste from the right side in order to watch the finished width of the binding.

When stitching on binding for the final finish with the seam pushed into the binding, it is sometimes easier to hold the bulk of the sewing under the arm of the machine or to the right of the needle, so that the stitching may be made close to the binding. The stitching must be very close to avoid any semblance of a home-made effect. Some machines have a cording foot that makes it possible to stitch close to a ridge. This foot is excellent to use for this purpose.

Machine-stitched  
finish



## COMMERCIAL SEAM-BINDING

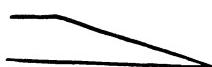
Commercial bias binding can be purchased in all shades for cotton and in some shades for taffeta. The cotton binding is made in both heavy and thin materials, some having the stitching thread enclosed with the package. This is an advantage. All cotton binding is machine-stitched on the binding on the right side, while bias binding made of self-material is not stitched on the binding but on the dress, or is finished down by hand.

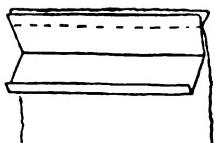
Cotton bias binding

Cotton bias is sold ready to apply with the edges pressed under, and some is folded double. The double fold can be applied with one stitching after some practice, especially with the sewing machine binder.

Modern sewing machines have an attachment for bias that applies it with one stitching. To use the binder, it is necessary to trim off the edge of the bias to a sharp point and

Sewing-machine  
binder

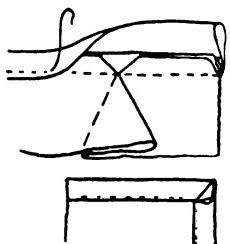
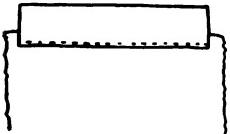
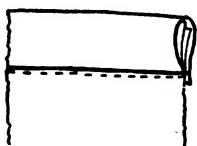


**BIAS BINDING****Binding curves**

then push the point into the binder with a stiletto or long darning needle. After it is properly placed, it is easy to apply. If the binder is not used, it is advisable to apply the binding with one or two bastings or with the first edge basted before it is turned and stitched.

The beginner should baste all bias before stitching. It requires experience to stitch without basting. After basting, place the seam on the table to be sure that it lies flat. If it does not lie flat, rip and rebaste.

When sewing bias to an inner curve it is necessary to stretch the bias slightly as it is being applied; when stitching to an outer curve, the binding is not stretched but is eased around the curve, the amount of ease or looseness of the binding depending upon the sharpness of the curve. It is advisable to test the basted binding as it rolls over the edge.

**Binding points****Ribbon binding****Coat binding**

Inner points that are to be edged with commercial bias should be clipped to the depth of the seam before the binding is applied. The point is then stretched out into a straight line as the binding is basted on. After the binding is finished, the point is caught on the wrong side as in a V-neck dress.

Outer points that are to be finished with bias binding will have the binding stitched to the end of the point on one side. The binding will then be basted into a small dart to form a miter. The corner is then turned and the binding is continued down the other side.

Ribbon seam-binding is generally used for inside finish of heavy materials and velvets. It is used for the finish of hems, plackets, and cuffs. The thin ribbon is flat-stitched to the goods without turning the seam under and with the stitching on the edge of the ribbon. The top edge of the ribbon is then caught to place and the edges are not turned under (see section on hems).

Bias silk or cotton binding can be purchased to finish coat seams. This is applied similarly to binding cut from material. It is used for finishing the edges of unlined coats and curved edges. Coat seams are bound with the binding. It is opened on one edge, basted to the right side of the material, stitched to place, turned close to the seam edge, and then the remaining edge of the binding on the under side is opened and basted flat to the seam. The seam is turned to the right side and machine-stitched in the fold of the goods, or directly below the binding and not on it.

Satin or sateen can be cut into coat binding and can be applied in the same manner.

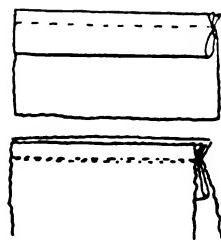
Piping is applied with no visible stitching. It is placed between the edges of the goods. The seam is invisible when stitched to place. The following rules must be followed to be able to stitch it to a uniform width, unless one edge of the seam is flat-stitched from the right side.

Open the bias binding and baste double to one side of the seam only. Remove the bastings after stitching.

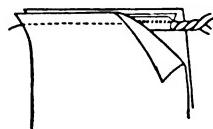
Place the matching edge to the seam and turn the seam to the side showing the first stitching of the piping. Follow the first line of stitching as a guide for the final stitching. This makes the stitching invisible and the piping even.

For making corded piping a special machine attachment—a cording foot—is required, as the seam must be close to the edge. A bias strip is basted over the cord. This prepared cord is then basted to one edge of the seam and stitched. The machine seam is then basted over the cord. Turn the seam over and follow the first row of machine stitching as a guide for the final stitching of the seam. Stitch close to the cord.

Piping



Corded piping



## QUESTIONS

1. What is the difference between binding and facing?
2. What is a false binding?
3. Should neck and sleeve finishes harmonize?
4. How wide should binding be finished?
5. How should it be cut?
6. What is a true bias?
7. What is a near bias? A long bias?
8. How do you find a true bias?
9. How wide is a double bias binding cut?
10. How wide is a single bias cut?
11. Which is the easier to apply?
12. How are uneven ends matched?
13. Are the seams stitched wide or narrow when joining bias?
14. How is the seam matched when joining?
15. Why are they stitched wide?
16. How are several strips joined?
17. How is it pressed double?
18. How should necklines of sheer material be treated?
19. Where is the neck binding started?
20. Is the binding stretched on a neck? Why? Where?
21. Should puckers be pressed out?

**BIAS BINDING**

22. Should it be basted for the first stitching? For the finish?
23. How is the needle gauged when stitching binding to dress?
24. How is the raw edge of single binding turned under?
25. How wide is machine-finished binding cut? How is it applied?
26. Where is the machine finish made?
27. How are inner and outer points finished with bias binding?
28. How are inner and outer curves finished with bias binding?
29. How is ribbon binding applied? When is it used?
30. How is bias used on unlined coat seams?
31. What is piping? How can it be made straight?

## CHAPTER 14

### Facings

Facings are flat sections of materials that finish the edges of garments without protruding; a binding extends beyond the edge.

A facing can be made either wide or narrow and can be made on the wrong side as a finish or on the right side as a trimming. All facings that are wider than one inch, finished, should be termed fitted facings and should be made as such.

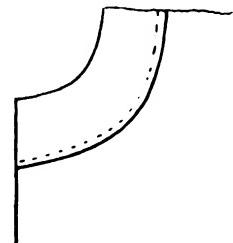
A shaped or fitted facing should be cut to fit the edge that is to be faced and should be *cut on the exact thread of the material as the section that is being faced*. This means that the lengthwise thread of the outer section must be matched perfectly with a lengthwise thread of facing. Be careful not to confuse the crosswise thread with the lengthwise thread when cutting a facing, as the two will shrink differently and the garment will draw if the facing is not cut perfectly. It is advisable to piece the facing if necessary to be able to secure the correct thread of material.

Fitted facings for hems, revers, necklines, and so on, should be carefully cut to prevent them from drawing. If the crosswise thread of goods is to be used as a trimming, such as in stripes or plaids, it is advisable to shrink all of the material before making.

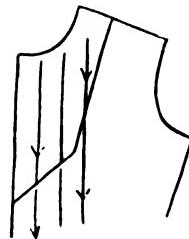
When facings are pieced, be sure to make all joining seams on the lengthwise thread of material—never on the bias. The seam should be matched perfectly, pressed open, and then tested to determine if it is the correct shape before it is applied. Narrow facings can be made on a true bias.

Fitted facings such as collars, cuffs, revers, lined sections of peplums, drapes, flares, and circular sections should be

Facings defined



Shaped or fitted facings



Piecing facings

## FACINGS

cut from the same pattern as the outer section, carefully watching the lengthwise thread.

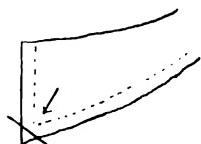
#### Curves—curved facings

Curved facings or those cut on the bias should be first machine-stitched around the cut edge before the edge is turned under for the finish. This simplifies the final attachment of the facing to the garment.

#### Edge seams pressed open

The outer edge seam and joining seams of all facings should be pressed open before the facing is turned rightside out. This will apply not only to straight edges but also to all circular edges. If a seam is so joined that it will not lie flat when opened—such as on the edges of collars—clip the seam and then press back one side of the seam that has just been stitched; turn and press back the other side.

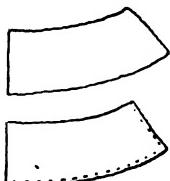
#### Outer corners and curves



#### Inner points and curves



#### Trimming facings



#### Edge stitching



All right angles or less than right angles should be curved at the point rather than stitched to a true point so as to prevent the point from bulging. For the same reason, all outer corners must be clipped off before the seam is turned (see illustration). The short end of the collar seam should be pressed open.

All inner curves, such as necklines, should be clipped every inch before turning. All inner points must also be clipped to within two or three threads of the sewing line. If this is not done, you will not be able to turn a perfect curve. A wide seam should be trimmed off to one-quarter inch before turning.

All invisible facings such as revers facings, collars, and so on, should be cut exactly like the outer section and *then* trimmed off one-eighth inch on the outer edges. The trimmed edge will be made on the seam that is joined to the outer matching section, which will be *under* the collar or revers. The smaller edge is held to match the larger edge. It will make the seam roll under so that it will not protrude when finished; and the seam will be invisible.

All outer edges of under facings should be machine-stitched with one turning before the facing is applied. If the facing is quite curved, it is advisable to first machine-stitch the raw edge before the edge is turned and stitched.

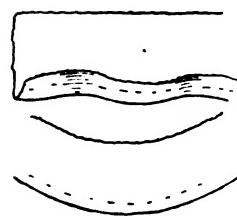
Curved edges turn evenly if previously machine-stitched. The fraying threads are held in place with the second machine-stitching, thus reducing the number of stitches required to slipstitch the facing to the garment.

If the facing is narrow and cut on a true bias, stretch the outer edge as it is stitched in order to make it curve to fit the curve of the neck—or any similar curved section. If the facing is cut on the bias for the lower edge of a skirt, ease in the finished edge when turning under, so as to fit the inner curve of the hem. If the machine-stitching is too tight, it can be loosened by easing out the bobbin thread; if too loose, the bobbin thread can be drawn up. Press to shape before the final finish.

The edge of the facing is attached with the dress wrong side out. Slide the basting board into the neck or front of the dress on the inside. Flatten the facing against the dress and baste to place, basting a quarter of an inch back from the finished inside edge. Be sure that the facing lies flat, and baste flat.

The facing is now ready to be attached to the garment. Remove the basting board. Pick up the garment along the basting and fold the facing toward the back with an eighth of an inch protruding at the top. The dress is then slip-stitched to the facing back from the edge by sliding the needle into a fold of the stitched facing and catching two threads of the dress. The stitches can be made far apart but they must be loose. The basting line should not be drawn tight. Backstitch every three inches. This loose basting will prevent the stitches from drawing and the back-stitch will hold the loose stitches in place. (See directions for making a tailored hem.)

Fitting curves



The basting board



### QUESTIONS

1. What is the difference between facing and binding?
2. If it is wider than one inch, what is it termed?
3. How is a shaped facing cut? What is the important requirement of a facing?
4. How is a facing pieced?
5. What is to be done before applying a facing?
6. How are facings for collars and revers cut?
7. What is to be done to outer curves and corners?
8. What is to be done to inner curves and corners?
9. How are curves stitched on facings?
10. What is to be done to facings of collars and cuffs?
11. How are the edges joined?
12. How are edges of curves pressed open?
13. How can narrow facings be cut?
14. How is a true bias shaped to fit the outer edge?
15. How is the facing attached to the garment?

## CHAPTER 15

### Collars and Necklines

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#### Too-low necklines

Necklines are made in various designs, but they should often be modified to suit the type of individual who is to wear the garment. If the neck is low, it may be too low for some individuals; and if it is high it may be more becoming if it were made lower. The broad, round face should wear the V-shaped necks and should modify round necks so as to make the face appear longer rather than broader. The same is true of the long, thin face: the V-shaped necks should be raised to the rounder type and possibly a collar should be added.

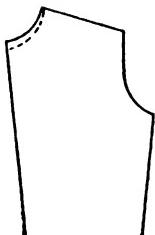
#### Cutting cautiously

Be cautious when cutting a neckline. Cut the neck higher than indicated in the pattern and mark the pattern line, but do not cut it low. A neckline cut half an inch too low may ruin the appearance of the dress on the individual. It is always possible to cut out the neck later. Material can be cut off, but it cannot be patched on.

Necklines and sleeves should harmonize. If the neckline has a collar, the edge of the sleeve should have a semblance of a cuff or cuff trimming. If the neck is bound as a finish, the edge of the sleeve is bound also. If the neck is faced, then the sleeve is also faced.

Binding is often used as a trimming when there is no definite neck finish in collars or drapes. When there is a collar or a partial collar in the front, back, or sides, or when there is a draped or scarf effect, the neck and sleeves should be faced. The same finish will extend around the neck whether it is bound or faced. It will not be faced over the collar and bound over the open section.

#### Binding a trimming



#### Wide facings

When wide facings are flat-stitched to the right side of the neck for a trimming, a similar trimming is often made on

the sleeve. When a revers is faced, or a front facing is applied, the facing extends under the fold for two inches and is attached to the shoulder seam. This prevents the raw edge from being visible. The facing of a lapel will be on the right side of the garment when the fold is turned back. Remember this when cutting. When the front is faced, the back of the neck should also be faced. The facing should be made the same width as the shoulder seam of the front facing.

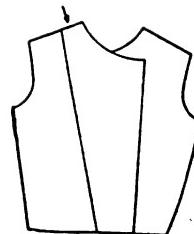
Necks and sleeves are often finished with facings. The wider facings are cut on the same thread of material as the outer section, while a narrow facing can be cut on a true bias. (See *Facings*.)

A collar usually rests at the bone in the back of the neck unless otherwise designed. This is especially true of the one-piece collar that opens in front. A back opening often drops lower. Individuals with short necks should avoid collar effects; they shorten the neck. The woman with the long neck can even increase the width of the collar and make it stand higher.

A collar that rolls up at the back of the neck decreases the apparent length of the neck. This can easily be accomplished by a slight modification of the collar pattern. Cut a sample collar of muslin and baste to the dress or coat. The collar will stand higher if the outer edge is decreased. Take a quarter-inch dart at the outer edge at the shoulder line of the collar pattern and pin this into the pattern. Do not reduce the neck size. The collar can be made to lie flat on short necks by slashing the pattern and spreading it a half inch at the shoulder line. Baste it to the dress and determine if it has the desired effect. The muslin can be changed and the material will be cut from the altered muslin pattern.

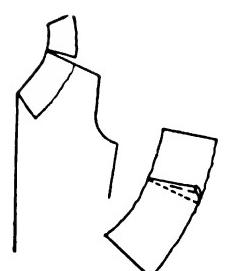
When one shoulder is lower than the other, the same amount of alteration that was made in the shoulder seam must be made in the collar, retaining the original center back of the collar. This will make one side of the collar longer than the other, but it will make the collar set perfectly and without twisting at the center front.

All collar facings should be cut on the same thread of material as the outer collar. The facing can be pieced if the material is not too transparent. If it is, the transparent collar should be lined to cover the edge seaming. All piecing seams must be along the straight thread of material



Narrow facings

Collars



Modifications

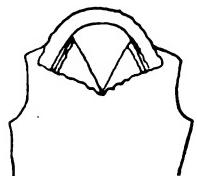


Piecing lengthwise threads

## COLLARS AND NECKLINES



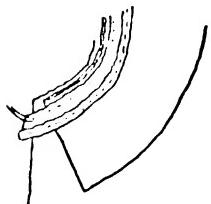
Loops or buttonholes



Trimming facing



Applying the collar



and all must be pressed open with the collar laid flat so that the two collars can be perfectly matched before being joined. Open the collars for testing. Do not measure from a half collar; it will not be a true test.

If the collar is to be finished with tailored loops or bound buttonholes at the edge they must be made before the facing is attached. In some tailored collars the bound buttonhole will be made on the facing, as this will be the outer section when worn. Test the placement before making, marking the buttonholes.

Heavy material should have the under collar trimmed back at the outer edge before stitching. This will make the collar edge roll under and be invisible. Cut the two collars exactly alike, then trim off the under collar or the facing one-eighth inch on all outer seams. The neck seam will remain the same. When the two collars are basted together the longer edge is held to the shorter edge and pinned together before basting, matching the centers. The edges will be held together when basting and the longer edge will be held in to the shorter edge, with the slight fullness eased in.

Stitch the seam at the edge and, if possible, press it open before trimming short. Clip all inner corners and notch outer curves and corners. At least one side of the seam can be pressed back before turning under. After the collar is turned, baste along the edge and the seam will roll under the collar and be invisible from the front. Baste the collar edge and press flat.

The collar should be finished complete before it is applied to the dress. The collar edges at the neck are basted together and will both be basted to the dress. One side of the collar is not used for the finish. This makes a bulging seam under the collar and does not permit the collar to set smoothly. Even a standing collar should be finished in this manner.

The collar is then basted to the dress and a separate facing is basted over it. This facing can be a narrow true bias cut one and a half inches wide, or it can be a fitted facing. This will make four thicknesses stitched at the neckline: the two collar edges, the dress, and the facing. Stitch to place, baste flat, and finish. (See *Facings*.)

When a round collar is attached to a blouse that has a hem down the front, the center-front hem is not turned and basted to place until *after* the collar is applied. Match the center notches of the collar and the blouse and notch an even placement of the collar from the center-front notch. Baste the collar to the neckline.

Fold back the front hem *over* the collar point in front. The hem will cover the front edges of the collar. The hem is turned wrong side out and overlaps the right side of the collar. Baste across the remaining position of the neckline across the top of the hem.

The collar and hem are now basted at the neckline. Prepare a true bias strip one and one-half inches wide. If the material is sheer, this may be folded double. If heavy, the edge is turned back and machine-stitched, stretching the edge while stitching. This will be the outer edge of the finished collar facing and should be longer than the inner edge where it is attached to the neckline.

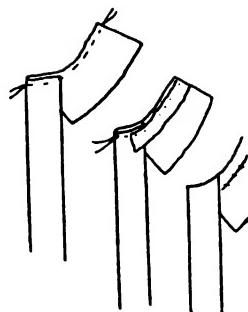
Baste this strip over the collar, easing it in at the neckline for the inner curve. The facing should lie flat when basted. This facing strip extends just beyond the ends of the front hem edge.

All sections now are machine-stitched to the neckline, stitching the collar, the facing, and across the top of the front hem all in one stitching. Turn back the front hem to the right side and the neckline will have a perfect professional finish. The edge of the facing is then slipstitched to the dress.

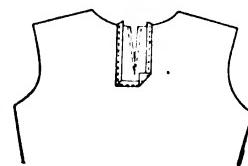
A slashed opening should be finished carefully to secure perfect results. If the material is rayon or some other material that will fray, it is advisable to overcast the slash as soon as it is cut. The slash is usually made on closed portions such as a neckline or a tight sleeve. In these cases, the garment may be tried on before the slash is finished thus causing the seam to fray.

If tailored loops are to be used for the closing, they must be set between the seam of the facing and dress. The facing is basted over the slash. Then turn to the visible side of the colored stitching line made as a guide for the loop application, which will be the wrong side of the dress. Stitch the edge seam, making but one eighth-inch seam. Make the seam smaller toward the end of the slash. When the end of the slash is reached, lower the machine needle into the

Round collar with front hem



Slashed openings



## COLLARS AND NECKLINES

seam, raise the presser foot, and swing the goods around the needle, using it as a pivot. Set the seam for the return seam, then lower the presser foot and stitch up the other side of the slash. Buttonhole-stitch around the end of the slash for one-half inch.

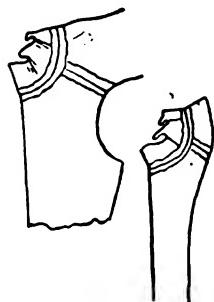
### **Attaching facing**

The edge of the facing should be turned back and machine-stitched before it is attached to the dress. Slide a basting board into the blouse, pin the facing to place, and baste. Slipstitch with loose stitches.

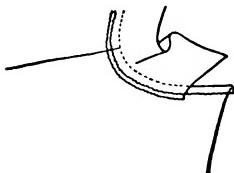
### **Tailored collars**



### **Sample lesson**



### **Joining**



Tailored collars and convertible collars are made differently from the regular set-on collar as just described. There will be a joining seam along the edge that must be smooth and flat. Many of the tailored dresses are made in this manner.

The collar described will be a simple coat dress with a straight collar stitched across the neck and turned back to form revers. The coat collar will be a shaped section but will be applied in the same manner. The straight strip across the back of the neck is often used in dresses.

It is advisable first to make a sample collar and facing. Cut a sample of the front and back section to below the armhole line. Also cut a facing for both the front and back section. Cut two sample collars. The matching sections must be cut on the same thread of the material. Both collars should be cut on the same thread of the goods and must be perfectly matched. Join the shoulder seams of both the outer section and also of the facing. Baste one of the collars to each section.

Be sure to press open the neckline seam that joined the collar to the dress and facing. This pressing is often omitted. One side of this pressed-open seam will be used later, and it must be perfectly flat.

The facing and collar is now ready to be attached to the other collar and to the dress. Slide the facing section over the dress section and baste the two collars together carefully,



matching the center backs and the seam lines at the front. Baste all around the collar and down both sides of the front.

If the collar is a notched collar as in a coat, the inner corners of the seams should be clipped off so that the seam can be pressed open and the points will not interfere with a true basting to the point. If they do not match, the basting should be ripped and the seams must be made to match. These seams will be basted together on the under side later.

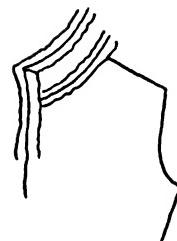
This outer seam on the edge should be pressed open. If it cannot be turned and pressed, press back one edge of the seam at a time. Then turn, baste at the edge, and press again.

The next step is important and is usually omitted by the home sewer. This step is accomplished *after* the collar is turned to the right side. Pin the collar and facing together on the right side along the upper edge of the neck seam, placing the pins on the collar side and parallel with the seam. This is the seam that joins the collar to the garment.

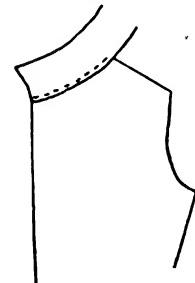
Turn the wrong side of the seam outward by turning the facing back until the seam is visible. Sew the two raw edges together with hand sewing as close to the seamline as possible. This holds the two seams together and prevents them from slipping. Press flat.

Tailored collars of thin material can be made in the following manner. Make the collar complete and press. Machine-stitch the neckline and measure the center. Match the center of the back of the collar to the center of the back of the neck, and pin. Pin the ends of the collar at an equal distance from the points of the revers. Baste the collar to the neckline. Baste the facing to place over the collar at the neckline. Baste on a true bias strip to cover the back of the neck for a finish. Machine-stitch all to the neckline and turn. This easy method may be used in material that will not develop a bulge along the seam at the neck.

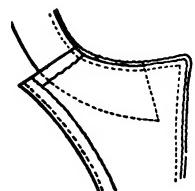
**Pressing open  
the seam**



**Basting necklines**



**Collars of thin  
materials**



## QUESTIONS

1. Why should necklines often be modified?
2. Should the broad face wear a V-neck?
3. Should the short neck wear a high collar?
4. Does a half-inch make a difference?
5. How should necklines and sleeves harmonize in finish?
6. When is the neck bound? When is it faced?
7. Does the front revers facing extend back of the neck?

8. Are facings made narrow? How are they cut?
9. Where does the collar rest?
10. What is done to make a collar roll higher in the back?
11. What is done to make a collar lie flatter?
12. How is a collar facing cut?
13. Can the facing be pieced? When? How is the piecing matched?
14. What should be done before joining the two collars?
15. Is it advisable to measure from a folded collar?
16. When are tailored loops applied?
17. When are bound buttonholes made?
18. What is done to the facing of collars of heavy material?
19. How much of the edge is trimmed off?
20. Which edge is trimmed? Which edge remains the same?
21. How are the two edges basted? Where are they matched?
22. Which edge is held on top when basting?
23. Is the seam pressed open?
24. What is done after the collar is turned? What is then done?
25. What is done to the neck seam?
26. How is the collar finished to the garment?
27. What is used for a facing?
28. What two kinds of facings may be used?
29. How is a slashed opening faced? How wide is the seam?
30. How is the point stitched? What is then done to the point?
31. If loops or bound buttonholes are made, when are they made?
32. Are convertible collars made the same?
33. Should a facing be cut for the back of the neck?
34. From what thread of material is the facing cut?
35. Which collar is stitched to the dress?
36. Which collar is stitched to the facing?
37. What is then done to the seams?
38. How are the two joined?
39. What other two seams must match?
40. What would cause an error?
41. How are the pins placed?
42. What is then done to the back of the neck facing?

**PART IV**

**Sleeve and Skirt Finishing**



## CHAPTER 16

### Sleeves

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Only one sleeve pattern is furnished for a garment having two sleeves. This one sleeve pattern must be used for cutting both sleeves, and therefore some difficulty may result; two sleeves may be cut for the same arm. Sleeves are seldom cut from a folded section of the fabric. Sleeves usually are cut from sections that remain on the side of the material after the other sections are cut.

Because of this difficulty, it is best to make a trial layout before cutting into the material. This procedure will test the exact amount of material necessary and will also test the economy in cutting an altered pattern.

Use two sleeve patterns for the layout, cutting an extra sleeve pattern from newspaper and exactly duplicating the one sleeve pattern that is given with the garment pattern. The printed lines and columns of the paper offer perfect lengthwise and crosswise lines to match to the threads of fabric.

The newspaper sleeve pattern is not used for cutting. It is used only to determine the exact amount of material that must be reserved for cutting the second sleeve.

Sleeves must be cut perfectly. They should be cut together if possible, to eliminate any possibility of cutting two sleeves for the same arm. Place the right sides of the fabric together for cutting. If one sleeve has been cut, turn the remaining fabric over to the other side and repin the pattern to both sleeves. Do not remove the one sleeve; pin them both to the pattern. The pattern will be used later for marking the sewing lines.

A simple method of testing the correct sleeve to set into a certain armhole is to turn the sleeve rightside out, slide the

Two sleeve patterns

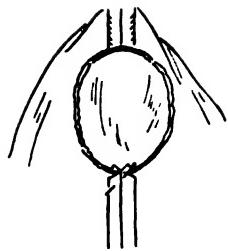
Trial layout

Two sleeves

Cutting

Perfect sleeves

Matching armhole and sleeve

**Set-in sleeve****Armholes****Matching sewing lines****No gathers in sleeves****No fullness at the top**

sleeve into the arm that is to wear it, then find the matching armhole. The deep curve at the underarm is the front. Set the right side of the sleeve to the right side of the dress at the underarm seam. Open both seams and pin them together. Do the same with the other sleeve. This procedure will check to determine if both sleeves have been made for the same arm, an error that is easily and commonly made.

A closely fitted sleeve set into a round armhole should be set into the armhole without gathers at the top of the sleeve, even though there will be some fullness on the sides. This fullness on the sides of the sleeve cap is necessary for smooth fitting over the curve of the arm and will make the armhole smaller than the sleeve cap. This fullness will be worked into the sleeve by turning the sleeve back over the hand when pinning to the armhole.

All sleeves set into round armholes will be set in this manner, even though they are full gathered or darted sleeves. The full sleeves will be gathered evenly as directed in the pattern and will be pinned to the armhole as directed in this chapter by turning the sleeve back over the hand.

The armhole of the dress should be held in shape by the sleeve or should be stayed with machine-stitching (not hand-sewing). The armhole should be stayed before the garment is fitted or it will be stretched out of shape; the more the garment is tried on without the sleeve or without staying the armhole, the more the armhole will be stretched.

It is important to match the sewing lines when setting a sleeve. Many sleeves are made too large for the armhole because too much seam has been allowed. The same is true of the armhole; it becomes smaller as the seam is widened. Increasing an outer circle of the sleeve cap lengthens the outer line, and decreasing the inner circle of the armhole shortens the line. Therefore, cut small seams when cutting armholes and sleeves, not over three-eighths inch. Fit the pattern and an extra allowance will not be necessary. If an extra allowance has been made, mark the sewing line.

The modern method of setting a plain sleeve into the armhole requires no gathers, even though there is a slight fullness in the sleeve cap. The old-fashioned method originated with the full-top sleeve, which required a gathering thread and all the fullness eased to the top.

Plain sleeves have no fullness at the top, for it is impossible successfully to ease in fullness along a straight thread

of goods. Fullness can be eased out only on a bias, and the top of a plain sleeve cap is on a straight thread and not a bias. Therefore the material will pucker when eased across the top of the sleeve. The underarm curve of the sleeve is also cut on a straight thread of material, which makes it impractical to ease in fullness at the underarm of the sleeve. Therefore, all fullness in the cap of the sleeve must be eased in on the slanting side of the sleeve cap, which is cut on the bias. The back and front of the side sleeve caps will absorb all the fullness easily.

All factory-made dresses have the plain sleeves set in without gathers, and all the fullness is eased in on the sides of the sleeve cap without gathers. No fullness is placed at the top of the sleeve. Fullness can be eased to a straight edge by holding the fuller edge uppermost.

The sleeve will be set in with pins. After it has been pinned to the underarm seam, pin the sleeve to the arm-hole at one and one-half inches to the front of the underarm seam and one and one-half inches to the back of the seam. Thus, it will be pinned flat to the armhole for three inches at the bottom.

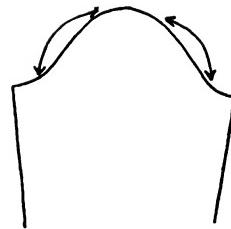
Place all pins crosswise to the armhole and hold the sleeve uppermost with the armhole at the back. Pins placed crosswise to a seam are easily removed when basting or stitching. Manufactured patterns place the center of the sleeve to the shoulder seam, but individual fitting often alters this center. It may be farther to the back or the front.

It is now necessary to fold the sleeve to find the center at the top. Place a pin for the mark. Fold the armhole *flat* (not stretched) to find the center and place a pin. Then pin these two centers together, holding the sleeve toward you. Place the pins crosswise to the seam.

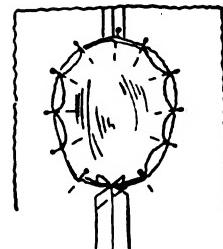
Three inches across the top of the sleeve will be plain—one and one-half inches on each side of the center pin.

Remember: *Three inches* at the top and *three inches* at the bottom of the sleeve are plain, and if the center has been correctly determined, there will be an equal amount of fullness on both the back and front of the sleeve cap. This rule applies to a plain-top sleeve or a sleeve with a darted top.

As you now look into the sleeve it is down inside of the armhole with fullness on both sides. It will not be reversed and will be turned out with the sleeve outside and the arm-hole inside the sleeve.



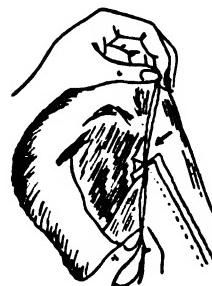
**Factory method**



**Pins crosswise**



**Three inches plain**

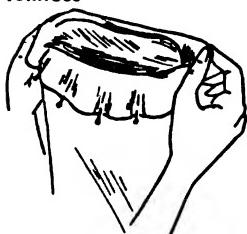


## SLEEVES

## Turning the sleeve cap



Remaining fullness



Uneven fullness

## Testing

Place the thumbs inside the sleeve as it rests inside the armhole. Turn the fingers up and the hands back so that the palms of the hands are outward. This will turn the sleeve out, and the armhole will be under the sleeve. Do not turn back the whole sleeve. It is only the sleeve cap that will be turned back. The sleeve will now be resting as it will be when worn over the shoulder. The fullness will almost all have disappeared.

All of the remaining fullness will be worked out with pins on the bias edge of the sleeve cap. As the sleeve is turned back over the hands, place a pin in the center of the fullness on one side of the sleeve. Then place a pin in the center of the remaining fullness on each side of that pin and continue until all the fullness is worked out. The pins will be an inch apart. Repeat on the other side.

If there is more fullness on one side of the sleeve than the other, then the center was not found correctly. The center at the top of the sleeve will have to be changed to distribute the fullness equally. On very large sleeves some of the fullness can be eased a trifle lower to the underarm, as this type of arm often has a small armhole and a large arm.

The sleeve can now be tested for perfect setting. Keep the sleeve wrong side out, slide the fingers into the armhole, and flatten out the sleeve. Hold it in a rather stretched position to determine if there will be any drawing in the cap. If there is, there will be diagonal lines running from the pins that are incorrectly set.

Remove the pins and the sleeve will slip to the correct place. Repin to position. There should be no drawing in the sleeve as the hands are held into the shoulder and slightly stretched. Clip the curve of the armhole before stitching.

## Stitching

The sleeve can now be stitched into the armhole without basting, if one is an experienced sewer. If not, baste to position and then machine-stitch with the sleeve uppermost on the machine. Open the shoulder seam and spread it back

and away from the armhole as the back edge will draw if stitched into the seam; or press the shoulder seam to the front.

Remove the pins as the basting or the machine-stitching approaches. The heads of the pins being placed outward makes this possible.

Stitch on the sewing line of the pattern. If the seam is stitched too wide the sleeve will draw across the cap or the armhole will ripple. This also often happens when the inexperienced sewer attempts to set a sleeve into the armhole without any fullness. Too much fullness will also puff the sleeve, which is another indication of the seam being too narrow.

Sleeves can be set into the armhole before the dress is joined at the underarm. This method is used in factory-made dresses, but the above method will prove more helpful. Fullness is eased out on the bias section even with the factory method.

Saddle shoulders and epaulet sleeves are fitted at the underarm and all require some ease at the sleeve cap, but not as much as does the set-in type. The fullness is equally distributed along the seam between the shoulder and armhole before the underarm seam is joined.

Raglan sleeves are looser than other sleeves and are not fitted close under the arm, hence do not require fullness in the sleeve cap; but the underarm is looser.

Do not French-seam a sleeve into the armhole. The ease that is necessary in the finished stitching makes it very difficult to French-seam. It is necessary to allow so much fullness on the first stitching that the importance of the final stitching is ignored. If there is not a great amount allowed on the first stitching it will all vanish with the second stitching and will draw the sleeve cap.

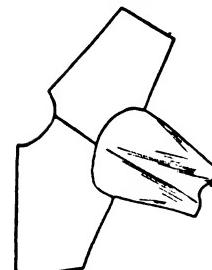
The armhole seam should be pressed open and overcast on each side on all heavy material. Firm material may be pinked if the seam is sufficiently wide for final pinking.

Sleeves made of sheer material may have the seams rolled for a finish. Roll under one edge and slipstitch it to the seam.

It is often advisable to pin a sleeve into the armhole while the dress is on the customer. The edges of the sleeve

#### Removing the pins

#### Too much seam



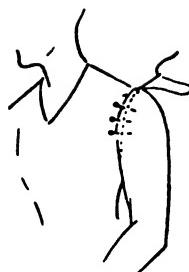
#### Sleeves extending to the neck

#### Raglan sleeves

#### Finishing the armhole

#### Sheer materials

#### Right-side sleeve setting

**Practice**

cap are turned under and the sleeve is pinned to the dress just as it will be finished. To be able to baste this to place without removing the pins, you must do this with right-side bastings. (See rules for right-side basting.)

Practice setting a sleeve by using two crepe paper napkins or handkerchiefs. Fold one diagonally and pin to represent the sleeve cap. Fold the other in half on the straight grain of material and pin shut, making it one inch smaller than the diagonally folded napkin. The smaller one will represent the armhole and the larger one the sleeve. Slide the sleeve into the armhole and follow the preceding directions. Two gloves can be used to simulate a sleeve and armhole.

**QUESTIONS**

1. Should both sleeves be cut at the same time if possible?
2. If the sleeves are cut on different parts of the goods, what should be done?
3. When is the pattern removed from the sleeve?
4. How is the sleeve tested for the correct armhole?
5. How are right sides matched?
6. What is the first thing to do when setting a sleeve?
7. Are underarm seams opened?
8. Are both sleeves pinned to the underarm seam first?
9. What is a set-in sleeve?
10. Is there fullness around the cap?
11. Why is it needed?
12. Is the sleeve cap larger than the armhole?
13. How is the armhole stayed?
14. How is a coat armhole stayed?
15. Should armholes be stayed before the dress is tried on?
16. Should the sleeve be set in before the dress is tried on?
17. Why are sleeves often too large for the armhole?
18. Why are armholes often too small?
19. What should be done in this case?
20. Do sleeves require gathers?
21. Do plain sleeves have fullness eased to the top?
22. Can fullness be eased out on straight threads?
23. Where are the straightest threads of the sleeve cap?
24. Where are the most bias threads?
25. Where is all the fullness eased out?
26. Where is the fullness eased out on factory-made dresses?
27. Is there fullness at the top of factory sleeves?
28. How many inches should be plain at the under part of the sleeve?
29. How are the pins placed?
30. How are the sleeve and armhole held?

31. How are the centers found in the sleeve and armhole?
32. Are these centers pinned together?
33. How many inches are pinned plain across the top?
34. Should there be an equal amount of fullness on each side?
35. How does the sleeve now appear?
36. What important step is now taken that eliminates fullness?
37. How are the thumbs held?
38. How is the sleeve turned outward?
39. Is the whole sleeve turned outward?
40. Where is the fullness now worked out?
41. How is it done?
42. Is a gathering thread used?
43. How far apart are the pins placed?
44. If the fullness is uneven on both sides, what must be done?
45. How is the extra fullness eased out on large sleeves?
46. How is the sleeve tested for perfect setting?
47. Should the armhole seams be clipped before stitching?
48. Can the sleeves be stitched without basting?
49. How is the sleeve held on the machine?
50. Is the shoulder seam opened?
51. Is the shoulder seam drawn back on the back shoulder seam?
52. Why is this seam drawn away from the armhole when stitching?
53. How is it easy to remove the pins when stitching?
54. Should a perfect sewing line be followed?
55. If the seam is stitched too wide, what happens?
56. If there is too much fullness in the sleeve cap, what can be done?
57. How are sleeves set into the armhole before the underarm seam is joined?
58. Where is the fullness eased out?
59. How are saddle-shoulder sleeves set?
60. Where is the fullness placed?
61. Is there fullness in a raglan sleeve?
62. Should sleeves be French-seamed to the dress, and why?
63. Should the armhole seams be pressed open?
64. How are armholes finished?
65. How are armholes of sheer fabrics finished?
66. How are sleeves basted in when set from the right side?

## CHAPTER 17

### Pleats

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#### Uses of pleats

Pleats are used both for trimming and to add fullness to the section in which they are placed. Single pleats are basted and made into the garment, while a series of pleats are usually made with a pleating machine.

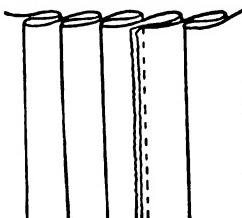
#### Length of material

If pleating is to be sent to the pleater, the length to be pleated will be three times the length of the space to be filled. If a ten-inch space is to be filled, it will be necessary to prepare thirty inches to cover the ten-inch space. As the pleats do not overlap, it requires three inches of material for one inch of space.

#### Hemming pleats

All material that is to be pleated by the machine should be hemmed before it is pleated, as it is difficult to make a perfect hem in pleated material after it has been steamed.

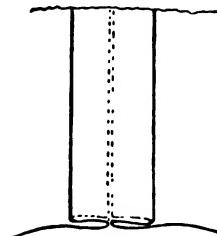
#### Width of pleats



Pleating on loosely woven material is usually made on the lengthwise thread of the goods, and a uniform width is necessary to retain the straight thread down each pleat.

If pleated sections are to be made by hand, plan to make all joining seams on the underlap of the pleat. The seam is not pressed open except at the hem.

#### Kinds of pleats



Pleats are of several kinds, each being popular in its season of fashion: plain pleats, knife pleats, box pleats, inverted box pleats, sunburst or fan pleats, and accordion pleats.

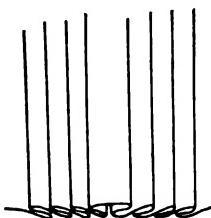
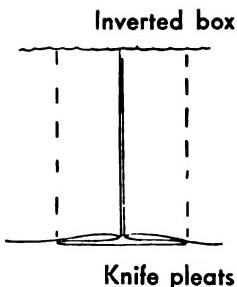
A box pleat is made with two pleats lapping in opposite directions, with the fold of the joining pleats meeting on the wrong side of the garment. (See the illustration on page 128.)

Box pleat

An inverted box pleat is made with the edges of the two pleats meeting on the right side of the goods. An inverted box pleat is often used at the end of skirt seams to produce fullness at the lower edge. The center joining line of the pleat should be a keen edge. Close this center line with thread basting to remain during construction. When the folds are equalized, press the pleats flat, press-mark the hem, and remove the basting.

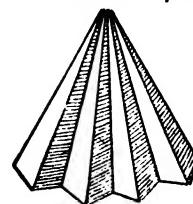
Several plain pleats made by machine are termed "knife" pleats. Several combinations of such pleats are often used on full, pleated skirts. These pleats are made only by the professional pleater. Most large department stores will furnish this service.

A complete skirt made of knife pleating is usually made with a box pleat at the center front, with the knife pleats at the side, lapping to the back, or in small groups with a center box. If all the pleats lap to the back and all the skirt is pleated, the material must be prepared and pleated open as in the rules for a middy skirt. The joining seam will be at the center back or under a pleat, and it will be basted to match the pleat edge.

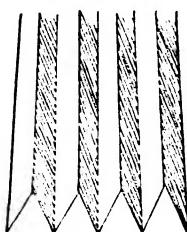


Sunburst pleats are made like the folds of a fan; in fact, they are sometimes termed "fan pleats." These can be made at home as an inset and are very effective. (See section on trimmings.)

Sunburst pleats



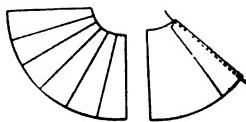
Accordion pleats



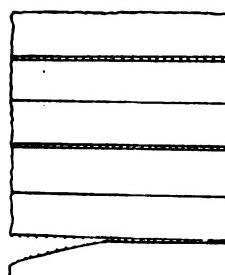
Accordion pleats can be made only by machine. They are made so as to overlap one another completely and they do not lie flat. They must be hemmed before they are pleated. A gathering thread is usually run across the top of the pleating to baste to position.

Radiating pleats or narrow tucks in circular skirts should be chalk-marked, basted, and pressed flat before stitching.

Circular skirts

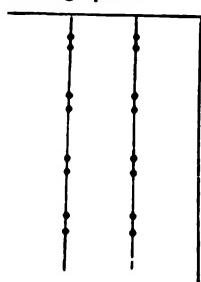


Piquoted edges  
for pleats



Pleated sections

Marking pleats



Press seams open before basting a tuck. If the skirt is quite circular, it is advisable to fold the pattern along the desired lines for tucking or pleating, press the pattern, and then mark this line on the skirt. Several folds cannot be pressed into any fabric with satisfactory results, as some spacings will be wider than others.

Hemstitching that is split for a piquot edge makes an excellent finish for narrow pleating. If a great quantity is to be used of one material, mark a large piece of material into the width desired and chalk-mark the lines with a ruler. Allow three times the running length for the length to be made when pleated. Have these lines hemstitched and cut apart on the hemstitching. This will make a finish to the edge of each strip.

If only every other line is hemstitched, just half the amount of hemstitching will be required. Thus, one unfinished edge on each strip will be left. Each line will be separated. Join the narrow strips *under* the folds of the pleats, matching the fold of the pleating rather than the thread of the goods, as the material may not pleat even.

Pleated sections should be made complete and pressed flat before they are set into the garment. If there is a box pleat in the back of the waist, finish the back completely before sewing it to the yoke. If there is a pleated section in the waist or skirt, finish it completely even to the final pressing before it is set into the garment. All pleats at the end of seams, such as a center box in front, should also be finished before the side seams are joined. (See section on pleats.) An intricate section of pleating may require right-side basting to set the pleats correctly into the garment. (See rules for right-side basting.)

Pleats are always marked on patterns either with lines or with symbols. These must be followed. Fold and crease the pattern into the pleats as they will be made in the garment so that the outer edge of the pleats can be located. This is the important mark to be followed. Mark this line in the material and also the matching line of the pleat.

Pleats may all be crease-marked in single sections of material as they lie on the garment when finished. The best method of marking is to mark with creases made with a hot iron. First crease the center line of a front or back and then open it.

Some manufacturers of patterns use printed lines and others use lines of perforations to show where material is to be folded to form pleats. A simple way to lay the pleats in the material is to pin the pattern to the fabric along these lines. Then fold the pleats into both pattern and material and crease-mark with the iron. (See section on marking seams.)

If this method is not used it is necessary to make a straight line to follow for basting. Chalk-mark the fabric on the right side of the dress, making a long line with the yard-stick the full length of the pleat. This outer line will later be folded back and pressed for a crease on the edge before it is basted to the pleat. This keen edge is necessary for perfect work; it requires less time for creasing than it does to fold under a wiry piece of material for basting.

All lines of the pleat should be marked with creases if possible. If the material cannot be creased, draw a chalk line with a long ruler and thread-tack it. The back edge of the large folds which will be the back center of the pleat should be marked with a crease to make it straight, as this will be the line that will be matched with the two folds of the pleats as they meet.

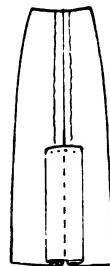
A perfect box pleat can only be made when the edges of the two pleats meet on a keen edge. This keen edge can only be secured with careful marking, basting, and pressing. The center line is also basted and machine-stitched closed. The machine-stitching is later removed. Match the two pleat edges as marked and thread-baste the full length of the pleat. Then chalk-mark along this basted line. Follow the chalk mark with machine-basting made with a loose tension and a long stitch. Then remove the thread-basting. Press the outer edge of the large pleat.

The double pleat (box pleat) is now all in one large pleat and must be separated. Work the pressed outer edge over to the machine-basted line and baste to one side. Then press the two pleats flat. The box pleat is now pressed to position. Baste across the top to hold in position. The pleated section will remain closed until after the hemline is marked, turned up, and pressed.

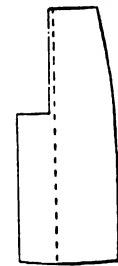
### Crease-marking the pleats

### Chalk-marking the pleats

### Center box cut in one with the skirt

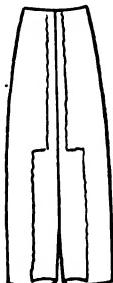
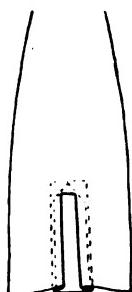
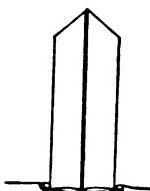


Center line of  
box pleat



Pressing pleats

## PLEATS

**Separate back****Inset pleats with square top****Inverted set-in pleat****Applied inset**

A pleated section may be cut to better advantage by making a separate back section to the box pleat. This will permit the pleated section to be cut in two sections and not on a fold.

Mark the center line and machine-stitch as directed above. Press the edges open to form the keen edge for the center line. Place the pleat wrong side up on the table, slide a basting board under one side of the pleat, and baste one edge of the back section to it. Then slide the basting board under the other side. Machine-stitch both edges of the pleat. The seams are not pressed open except under the hem.

Pleats set into slashed openings can be made with pleats on each side of the slot. The pleated section is creased down the center. Slash the opening to within a half inch of the top, and clip to the sides of the points so as to make the seam one-half inch wide.

Join the pleated section to each side. Press open the edge seams; baste the pleat back at the edge. Bring the pleats over to meet the center crease made in this pleated section before setting into the skirt. Baste flat. Turn under the point at the top and slipstitch to the pleats. Press flat. Stitch the top of the pleats to place from the wrong side, following the crease under the point.

Cut the opening for the inset-pleat the desired shape and size, allowing seams on the cut edges. Clip the inner corners, fold back the seam allowance, and press.

Prepare the inverted pleat, making it sufficiently large to fill the opening, plus an outer seam. Baste the pleat to the center line and press.

As the pleated section lies flat on the table, match the center of the prepared opening to the center of the pleat and pin to place.

Slipstitch the pressed edge of the opening to the pleated section, sliding the needle into the fold then into a few threads of the under section. Press. Remove the pins and all of the bastings except the slip-basting. Turn to the wrong side and stitch on the crease under the seam. Flat-stitching may be used as a finish only on tailored garments.

A pleat may be applied to a skirt in front or at the side. Mark and cut the opening the desired size, allowing for seams. Cut a fitted facing and stitch to the edge with a narrow seam. Clip corners, open facing and dress,

and press flat; fold back the facing and baste, then press again.

Prepare the pleated section, cutting it sufficiently large to extend under the faced edge to form the pleat. Pin the faced section over the inset, baste to place on the right side. Turn to the wrong side and stitch the loose edges together to form the pleat. (The right side may be machine stitched across the top edge.)

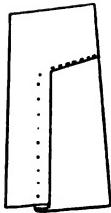
All box pleats that do not extend to the top of the skirt should be stitched across the top of the pleat. This line will follow the pattern indication; or if the material has a definite line of material or stripe, it will follow this line. Otherwise, the stitching can be straight across and pointed upward or downward. The upward point is more graceful and relieves the strain on the seams. Tack or tie the point well on the wrong side, as there is a great strain on this point in closely fitted skirts.

When an under-lapping pleat is made at the bottom of the side seam of a skirt, it will be handled in the same manner, basting the side seam the full length to the lower edge of the skirt *through* the pleat. This basting will remain in the pleat until the final finish and will insure a keen edge on the pleat, a perfectly straight line down the side, and a perfect edge across the bottom of the pleat. It is necessary to baste the line to the bottom to secure accurate results. Pleated skirts for uniforms or middy skirts that are fitted at the waist are made by a different method.

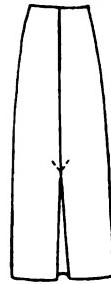
A pleated section is often set into a slash in the skirt which requires perfect tailoring to make the point perfect. The small pleated section is marked with a crease down the center. This line will be used later.

If the pleats are finished to a point, the seam must be taken very narrow on the skirt side, graduating to an even narrower width at the top and to within two or three threads of the point. The seam is an even width the full length of the inset. Stitch from the slash side of the seam. The pleated sections should extend a half inch above the top of the point.

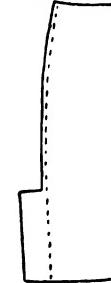
After the pleated section is stitched to the slash, press the seam open to make a perfect turning. The pleat will turn back on the seam rather than back in a fold of the pleat. After the seam has been pressed open, turn back the pleat at the edge, baste flat, and press. Do the same to the other side.



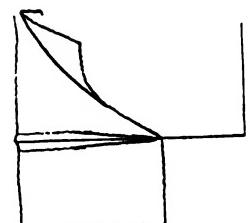
Stitching across top

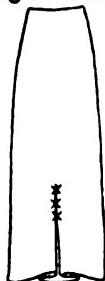


Opening the seams



Setting in a box pleat

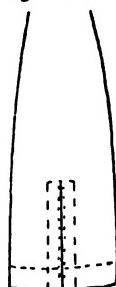


**Joining the center****Seams in pleats under hem**

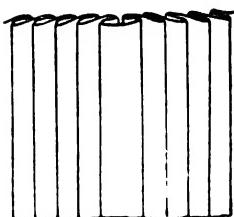
Place the skirt section rightside up on the table or over the basting board and place the center crease of the pleated section to the center of the slash. Then baste the edges of the pleats to meet this crease. Cross-stitch the edge at the top so that when the final pressing is given, the pleats will not spread.

If it is too difficult to make a perfect point, open the point and join with right-side basting.

All pleat seams on the inside of hems are pressed open. When the hem is basted, the pressed-open seams should lie flat against each other and should not twist to one side. The seam at the top and outside of the hem is clipped to permit the two edges of the seam to lie against each other. They are not pressed open.

**Marking hems**

All pleats should be basted to the bottom of the open hem and will remain basted until after the skirt is hung. The pleats are then pressed up on the hemline as they are basted shut. The bastings are then removed and the crease will be followed for the hem. This will make a perfect hem along the lower edge of the pleats and will make the back edge of the pleat a trifle shorter than the front. This is necessary for perfect hanging.

**STEAM-PLEATING****A middy skirt**

The middy skirt is made open and flat. It is measured from the hip size for the amount of material to be pleated, and the hip size is also used for the measure to which the skirt is made. Serge is the material generally used. Serge is fifty-four inches wide, and two or more skirt lengths of it is required. One length is cut down the fold and a half section is sewed to each side of the front section so as not to have a seam near the front. Figure three times the size of the hips and this will give the correct amount to prepare for the pleats.

**Marking the pleats**

After the seams are pressed open and the goods pressed down the center, decide on the width of the pleat. Measure a center box pleat at this width or make all pleats run one way. Mark all pleats at the hipline and also at the hemline.

Chalk lines will connect these marks after the pleats are spaced. Pleats marked in a straight line from waistline, through hipline, to hem, must later be altered from waist to hip to fit the smaller waist size.

Work from the right side of the material. If the pleats are to be two inches wide, mark every two inches from the center front both at the hipline and at the hemline for the pleats. Place the material on the table and chalk-mark each line the full length, using a yardstick.

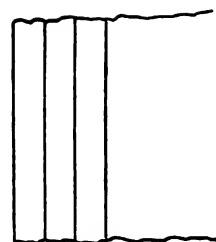
Counting from the first line drawn, every fourth line will be the outer edge of a pleat. Six inches are required to make one two-inch pleat, three times the width. Time will be saved if the outer edge of each pleat is pressed on the turning, picking up the goods along each six-inch line and, as the material is folded in one crease, pinning the ends to the pressboard and pressing. This procedure will hold the ends of the pleat in place. Plan to make the joining seams of the material invisible. If the seams are pressed open, they may be placed anywhere under the pleat.

Lay in the pleats with pins as marked, lapping all toward the center back. There will be a seam at the center back or under one of the back pleats after the skirt is finished. When the pleats are all pinned to place at the hipline only, measure to see if the hips are the desired width. If not, slide the pleats either way a trifle to secure the correct hip size. When the correct size is secured, slide the basting board under the pleats and run a basting thread along the hipline to hold the pleats in position. Then baste each pleat to the bottom of the skirt, being sure to follow the chalk lines.

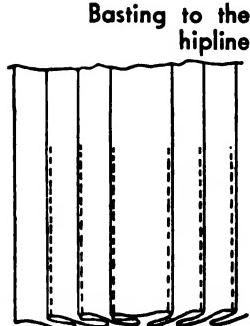
Use a belting or tape for a waist stay. (See section on belts.) Work from the center. Pin the center box at the center of the belt. Pin each center back to the belting, measuring the exact belt size. There should be an extension of the belting for the underlap of the closing.

All pleats will remain on the straight thread of material on the *outer edge* of the pleat. All overlapping will be made on the wrong side of the pleat. As there is more curve at the hip, the hip pleats should have the greatest overlap.

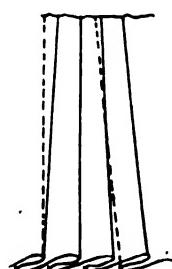
After the hipline and waistline are adjusted to size, catch a tape across the hipline on the wrong side at four inches below the waistline, catching the back edge of the pleat.

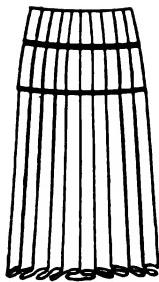


Pleating edges



The waistline





This tape will remain on the skirt to hold the pleats in place. There should also be a tape around the hipline. The tape is tacked on one edge only to the underfold of the pleat.

If desired, the pleats can then be stitched from the waist to the hipline, stitching close to the outer edge from the right side of the skirt. Apply the belt as for skirts.

Middy skirts attached to a waist lining can be made of straight pleating without being fitted in at the waistline. The skirt is hemmed and pleated as directed and hung from the hem upward.

### QUESTIONS

1. What is the cloth measurement for group pleating?
2. What are knife pleats?
3. Where is the closing seam on pleats placed?
4. What is a box pleat?
5. What is an inverted box pleat?
6. What are sunburst pleats?
7. What are accordion pleats?
8. Where do they differ from other pleats?
9. How is the top edge of accordion pleats fulled in?
10. How can narrow pleats be finished on the edge?
11. How can several strips be finished?
12. How are pleated sections made in a skirt?
13. When is a box pleat made in the skirt?
14. When should pleats be made complete?
15. When is right-side basting used?
16. How should all pleats be marked, in single or double sections?
17. What is the best method for marking pleats?
18. What lines are pressed for the pleat lines?
19. If crease marks are not used, what kind of a line will be followed?
20. How far down should pleats be basted?
21. When is the basting removed?
22. How is the basting board used?
23. Are fitted middy skirts made the same as other pleated skirts?
24. What size is used as a guide?
25. How many lengths of 54-inch material will be used?
26. How are the pieces joined?
27. How is the length to be pleated measured?
28. When is the hem made?
29. If a two-inch pleat is used how will the center box be measured?
30. How many inches are necessary to make one pleat?
31. What is done to each outer pleat edge?
32. How is the pleat held to the pressboard?
33. What is used for a waist stay?

34. Where is the belt started?
35. Which edge of the pleat remains on the straight thread of material?
36. Which edge of the pleat is altered at the waistline?
37. Where is the greatest overlap of the pleats?
38. Where is the tape stay placed?
39. Where is it tacked?
40. Can the pleats be flat-stitched as far as the hipline?

## CHAPTER 18

### Hanging Skirts

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#### Skirt length

Prevailing styles and individual choice determine the length of the skirt. Varying individual heights will also vary the distance of the hem from the floor. An average length for the average figure can be given, but this length would not apply to all individuals.

#### Even hems

The average hem is hung equidistant from the floor, but varying skirt designs may alter this rule. Draped skirts are often designed with uneven hemlines, but straight-edged skirts should not sag or be short anywhere.

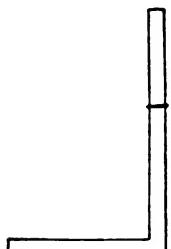
#### Belts

The skirt should not be belted too tight nor should it be fitted too closely at the hips. The dress skirt should be belted to place before the skirt is hung. Hems marked without the belt will later be drawn up in the back when the belt is worn and will be found to hang unevenly.

#### Tight skirts

Skirts that are fitted too tight in the hips will ride up on the figure in the back. It is advisable to test the fitting of a skirt by sitting in a chair before the hem is measured. This will test hip fitting before hanging the skirt.

#### Marking the hemline



It is important that the same shoes be worn when hanging the skirt as will be worn when wearing the dress. Different heights of heels will alter the length of the skirt from the floor. Stand firmly on both feet, as a slouched position will affect the hemline.

Hem markings can be made with pins or tailor's chalk. Pins have the advantage of making a true mark, but the chalk may be made diagonally and thus cause confusion. If marking with chalk, it is advisable to make a cross-mark to determine the exact spot that will be used as the guide.

A tailor's square is excellent to use for hanging skirts; it rests on one arm while the other arm measures the hem. A rubber band or string placed at the desired length will speed

the measuring. A yardstick or a long ruler may also be used. Patented skirt markers are also sold.

After the skirt length has been determined, it is advisable to turn up the hem at this line for a test. It is also advisable to try on the skirt after the final hem has been basted if there is any question as to its accuracy.

It is advisable to baste in a trial hem even if it may be basted too short in places. The basted hem gives a more encouraging effect to the work that has been accomplished and the hem can be hung easily.

If the hem has been basted too short, then mark the hemline one inch or even two inches shorter than the desired length. When the dress is finally marked, measure down the necessary amount from this line rather than rebaste the hem.

The hem may have been basted *almost* a perfect length, but one place may be found to be too short. Measure this spot one inch shorter and place crossed pins at this mark.

All hems in pleats are pressed for marking. The pleats are basted closed above the hemline. The skirt is then placed on the pressboard wrong side up and the hem turned back and pressed, pressing through the basted pleat. (See *Hems*.)

This tailor's method of marking pleats will give that knife edge at the bottom which is so desired. Pressing the basted pleat will make the back edges a trifle shorter than the front edge; and the thicker the material, the shorter will be the back edge, which is necessary. When the bastings are removed from the pleats, the pressed line will be continuous but part of the crease will be reversed. Follow the line as marked when making the hem.

Do not depend upon the looseness in pleats for loose skirt fitting. A skirt should fit perfectly with all the pleats basted flat. If a pleated skirt will not hang perfectly with the pleats closed, it is an indication that the hips or the thighs of the skirt are too tight. A figure with large thighs requires more allowance for fullness at the side seam of the skirt to permit the skirt to spread when the figure is seated.

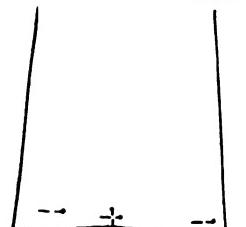
Circular or semicircular skirts made of loosely woven material will sag on bias seams. Material will sag more

### Testing the hemline

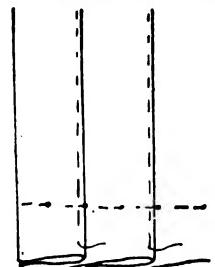
### Trial hem

### Hem too short

### One place too short



Pleats and hems



Looseness in pleats

### Sagging pleats

**HANGING SKIRTS**

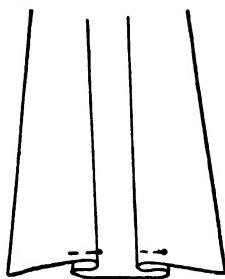
or less according to the material, and the crosswise threads will sag more than the lengthwise threads. Therefore, a skirt may sag more on one side of a bias-cut section than on the other side.

**Circular skirts**

A full skirt with bias seams should be allowed to hang for several hours before the skirt is measured. The looser the material is woven and the fuller the skirt, the longer the skirt should hang. It is advisable to keep any dress on a coat hanger while it is being finished rather than to keep it in a box. This will permit the sag to drop in any bias seams and you will avoid having to rehang the skirt later.

**Quick hanging of skirts**

If a circular skirt must be hung quickly, it is best to draw out the sag and press the seams on the pressboard, drawing down on each seam while pressing. The seam will not stretch more than it will sag, and thus it will be possible to hang the skirt with all sag removed.

**Folds****Trimming**

A full skirt will hang in folds at the hemline. The quickest method of hanging a full skirt is to pin all folds closed above the hemline just as they hang on the figure. Mark the closed fold with another pin at the hemline or baste across the hemline. The complete hemline will then be *pressed* by placing the skirt on the pressboard wrong side up and folding the pinned or basted hemline back onto the skirt and pressing. When the pins are removed, there will be a perfect line around the skirt to mark an even hem line.

It is not advisable to trim off a skirt while the customer is being fitted. One inch too short in one place may ruin the garment. Pin or mark carefully, then baste or pin up the hem as a test and later press-mark the hemline before trimming it.

**Pleated skirts**

Hems should not be hung in skirts made of solid pleating, such as middy skirts. The hem should be made before the skirt is pleated. Such skirts are made with a straight section of material.

**QUICK METHOD OF SKIRT HANGING****Hanging skirts on others**

It is more convenient to hang skirts when the individual is elevated. A step is excellent to use. A small platform is also convenient, or even a foot stool. The length of the skirt would be tested before the person is elevated.

**Accuracy**

It is seldom possible to cut a skirt to an exact length. The posture and the material used will affect the skirt's

length. A test hem can be basted, but if checked accurately, discrepancies will usually be found.

Neither can a hem be marked correctly by placing it flat on a table. The sag of the material alters the length greatly. The skirt *must* be suspended to secure the correct length.

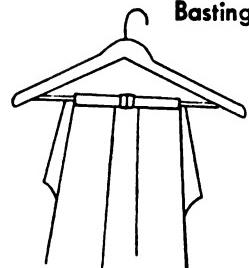
The dress should be placed on the wearer and the skirt belted to position. Stand close to a table or dresser. A small easel mirror on the table will be an aid. Where the figure touches the table, pick up a thread of the skirt, place in a small safety pin, and close it. Gradually move around the table, placing pins every four inches. When the back is reached, pick up the skirt and swing it to the side to place the pins.

Self-marking



Remove the skirt. Baste around the hipline. All of the curve of the body was *above this line*. The basting will give a continuous line for checking.

Select a coat hanger with a straight crossbar. Push the dress through this bar so that the waist and sleeves drop to the back against the skirt. Do not hang the dress by the shoulders.



Turn the hook of the coat hanger. Open a closet door and place the hanger on top of the door. The skirt is now suspended and the same as when worn.

Measure the height of the table. The skirt length has been determined. Subtract the height from the floor from the table height. For example: the table is 30 inches high and the skirt is to be 18 inches from the floor. Subtracting, we find that  $30 - 18$  leaves 12 inches to be measured down from the basted line.

The skirt was hung equidistant from the floor at 30 inches. It was measured perfectly. Then the lower measurement will also be even.

Even length

With a ruler or tapeline measure down from the basted line to the desired skirt length and mark. After a few chalk marks are made, a ruler can be placed across the lower edge and one continuous line can be drawn, shifting the fold of the material if so desired. The door offers a hard flat surface on which to mark.

Downward

**Children's skirts**

This method will be a boon to mothers who sew for children, for it offers a quick and accurate method and the task is soon completed. Then, too, it is *fun* for the child, as it keeps her moving.

**QUESTIONS**

1. How should pleats hang at the lower edge?
2. Should the hem be pressed through to the right side?
3. Should a test hem be basted into the dress?
4. How wide should a hem be made?
5. How does a flare affect a wide hem?
6. What kind of a hem is used on sheer materials?
7. How can a wide hem be made on children's dresses?
8. Should the belt be tightened when the skirt is hung?
9. Should the hips be fitted first?
10. What shoes should be worn?
11. How should the figure stand?
12. What happens to thin or loosely woven materials?
13. Do materials differ as to sagging?
14. What should be done to circular skirts?
15. What is done if the skirt must be finished quickly?
16. What is done if the trial hem is basted too short?
17. What can be done to one or two short places?
18. What are crossed pins used for?
19. What is an excellent tool to use for hanging skirts?
20. In marking, what can be used to aid poor eyesight?
21. How is the hem marked?
22. How is it tested?
23. How are circular skirts hung?
24. How is the fold marked later?
25. How is the skirt trimmed off on the customer?
26. How should all pleats be marked at the hemline?
27. Should seams in hems be pressed open?
28. How are the hems of solid pleated skirts hung?
29. How should the lower edge of stripes and plaids be hung?
30. Can a skirt be hung correctly by marking it flat on a table? Why?
31. Why should a skirt be suspended for hanging?
32. From what line on the figure does the skirt length vary?
33. What line is even?
34. How is the skirt marked on one's self?
35. Should the hem be tested, and how?
36. How is the skirt then suspended for the final hanging?
37. What line is held in place with pins?
38. How is the length measured?
39. How is the hem on circulars marked?
40. How is the final mark checked?

## CHAPTER 19

### Hems

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Hems on skirts should, as a rule, be not wider than two and a half or three inches, finished. A two-inch hem is even easier to handle, and if the skirt is circular or cut with a decided flare, a two-inch hem will be too wide. In such skirts, a narrow rolled hem is often the best to use, especially on thin materials.

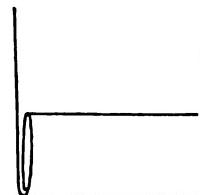
Wide hems can be made in children's dresses to allow for "let-out." This wide hem allowance can be folded under for the first turning, thus making the hem appear much narrower. The skirt can be let down the width of the hem. This will make a hem of three thicknesses rather than two, but it is advisable when a "let-out" is desired.

Mark the lower edge of the skirt as directed in hanging skirts. Remove the dress and place it on the pressboard wrong side up. Press up the hem on this mark, making the crease even from mark to mark. This crease will test any possible errors in marking and will insure a perfect turning. This final crease marking applies to all skirts whether the hem is wide or narrow. It will be crease-marked before it is trimmed off.

When a skirt is quite circular, it is sometimes advisable to run a gathering thread along the top of the hem to draw out the fullness before pressing; but in most fabrics, a satisfactory result can be attained by pressing flat.

After the hem has been crease-marked, baste it onto the skirt at a quarter inch from the bottom of the skirt. After this has been done, place the skirt on the pressboard wrong side up and press out the fullness, pressing from the lower edge of the hem to the top. It may be necessary to use

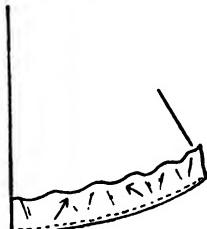
Width of hems



Marking the edge



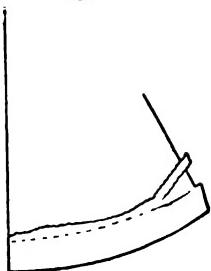
Pressing out fullness



## HEMS

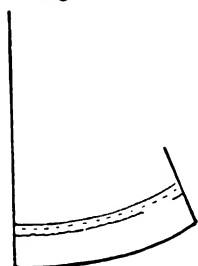
moisture as directed in the rules for pressing. Continue pressing until all the fullness disappears. Wool will shrink to shape more readily than any other material, but this fullness can be pressed out of practically all curved hems.

## Trimming off



After the fullness has been pressed out of the hem, it should be trimmed off to an even width. Check the general width to find the narrowest place in the hem, and if this place is not more than three inches wide, all of the hem should be marked to this width.

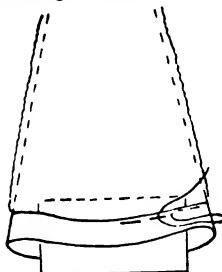
Notch a card at the desired width for the hem; a button card or a snap fastener card is convenient to use. After the hem has been trimmed off, it is ready for hemming.

Turning under  
the edge

Some dressmakers prefer to turn under the raw edge of the hem and either stitch it by machine an eighth of an inch from the edge or make a running stitch through it. This will be accomplished before the hem is basted to the skirt. It will then be pressed before applying.

The hem is then ready for basting to the skirt with the skirt wrong side up. Slide the basting board into the skirt and under the portion of the hem to be basted. The hem can then be properly arranged, the seams matched, and the hem pinned and basted flat.

## Basting board



*All wide hems should be basted flat.* It is very unsatisfactory to baste hems in the hands. The hem stitches are made in the hand, but the hem should be basted to the skirt with the skirt flat on the table wrong side out and the basting board (or a magazine) used in the skirt and under the hem.

A folded newspaper may also be used as a basting board. Stitches can then be taken through the hem but are prevented from catching onto the under side of the skirt.

Pressing the  
seams open

Press open all seams of the skirt that will be turned under the hem; this is especially important in a pleated skirt. Make these seams match as the hem is basted. Never stretch the hem across the seam. It will twist when finished, and a twisted seam cannot be straightened in pressing.

Finishing heavy  
hems

Heavy material is not turned under at the edge of the hem. The edge is finished with ribbon seam-binding or a commercial bias binding before it is caught to the

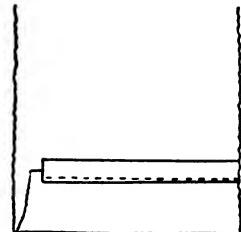
dress. (See section on binding.) The ribbon binding should be basted to a curved hem *after* the hem is pressed up and the fullness is pressed out. The ribbon is basted to the raw edge of the hem with the ribbon flat. The basting board is slipped under the hem edge for the basting between the hem and the skirt. If this method is not used, either the ribbon or the hem will be ruffled. The neatness of the finished garment makes the few minutes extra time spent in perfecting the hem well worth the effort.

Sewing-machine attachments for hems are of various widths. They are used for narrow hems and are excellent to use when hemming long lengths of material. Wide hems should be turned by hand, basted, and then stitched either on the sewing machine or by hand. Very few dress hems are made on the sewing machine, even in the better made cotton house dresses. If the hem is to be machine made, be sure to *lay it flat on the table and pin it at the seams* before basting. If the seams do not overlap perfectly, the seam will twist when finished.

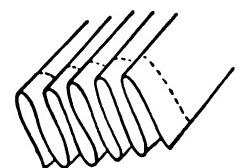
Material such as gingham, which holds a crease, can be creased in the hands. Make the first turn of the hem by creasing with the fingers and folding the edge up in the fingers as the creasing progresses. The procedure is similar to that of making a set of accordion pleats about an inch wide.

Organdy hems, especially if on the bias, may be rolled between the thumb and finger; they will remain rolled without being sewed, but will not be washable. Dampen clean fingers with the lips and roll up the edge, rolling about an inch at a time. Practice will make perfect. This type of hem is especially useful in making flowers and ruffles.

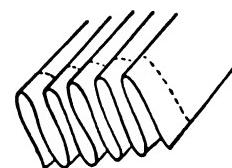
Hand-sewed narrow hems should be machine-stitched close to the raw edge—about one-eighth of an inch—before turning. As the hem is rolled under with the point of the needle it is slipstitched to the skirt. Trim off the rough threads as the hemming progresses. One end of the hem can be pinned to the basting board and a much narrower hem can be made very quickly. Use the slip-stitch when making the hem.



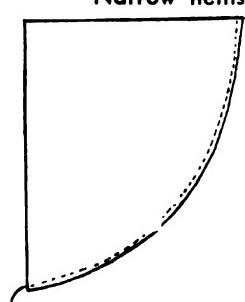
**Machine hems**



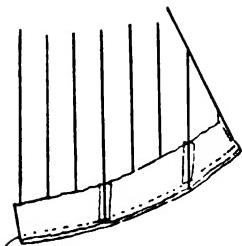
**Creasing hems  
by folding**



**Rolling hems  
without sewing**



**Narrow hems**

**Faced hems**

Faced hems are made differently. The facing must be cut on the same thread of material as the hem or a true bias. The former is preferable. The facing may be made in several pieces, but all the joining seams should be made on a lengthwise thread of material—never on a bias. The seam must then be pressed open. The facing is basted to the skirt after it is trimmed off even at the lower edge. The facing is held a trifle tighter than the dress so that it will roll back when turned.

After the facing is stitched to the skirt, press open the seam and trim it off to an eighth inch on the hem side. Then turn the facing back, sliding the basting board into the skirt and under the hem for the basting. Draw the facing seam back from the edge an eighth inch. Baste the hem at the lower edge along the seam line.

This procedure will make the joining seam invisible. After the facing is pressed back, join the two unfinished edges and slipstitch one to the other. (See right-side basting.) Stitch the seam and press open. Turn under the top edge and finish with a tailor's slipstitch.

**Velvet hems**

Velvet weaves and heavy materials such as broadcloth and heavy coatings should be edged with ribbon seam-binding before hemming. Skirt hems are often finished with ribbon binding, especially if the skirt is quite circular. First mark the hem, then turn it and press out the fullness (see *Hems*). Trim off the hem and slide a card under it as the ribbon is basted to its curved edge. This will prevent the ribbon from being basted too full or too tight, as the hem will lie flat during the process of basting the ribbon to place. The ribbon is then machine-stitched flat to the hem. After that, the hem is basted to the skirt one-quarter inch from the edge of the ribbon, the hem is turned back (see tailor's slipstitch), and the ribbon is caught to the skirt with loose stitches. When the ribbon is dropped into place, all of the stitches will be invisible.

**TAILOR'S SLIPSTITCH—THE INVISIBLE HEM****Invisible stitch on both right and wrong side**

The tailor's slipstitch is used for hems, facings, coat linings, indeed for any invisible sewing. It is an invisible stitch, for no threads will be visible on either the wrong or the right side of the goods if it is made correctly. Prepare the lower edge as directed, trim off, turn under the edge,

and baste the hem as it lies flat on the basting board, basting one-quarter inch from the edge. Lift the skirt and turn the hem *back* from the eye, making a fold of the skirt at the top of the hem with the hem dropping to the back.

The top of the hem now protrudes a quarter inch above the fold just made. Catch a thread on the skirt. In the same operation, slide the needle into the fold of the hem one-quarter inch and draw out the thread. Again catch a thread of the skirt and in the same operation slide the needle into the fold of the hem. Continue to the end of the hem.

When the hem is turned back, all the stitches are invisible; and if only a thread or two of the skirt has been caught into the needle, no stitches will be visible on the right side. The looser the stitches, the more invisible they will be. This is especially important to remember when hemming coats or heavy skirts.

When making a tailored hem, it is possible to take long stitches, much longer than can be taken with any other kind of a stitch. For this reason, such a hem can be made very quickly.

When using this stitch for coat linings, the stitches must be very close together.



**Making the  
stitches loose**

## QUESTIONS

1. What treatment should the upper edge of a wide hem receive?
2. Where is the first basting made when turning the hem?
3. How is the fullness in the top of the hem eliminated?
4. At what time is the hem trimmed off?
5. How wide should the hem be made?
6. What do some dressmakers do to the edge?
7. How is the hem basted to the skirt?
8. How is the pressboard used?
9. Should all hems be basted flat?
10. What is done to the seams under the hem?
11. When is ribbon seam-binding used?
12. When is the binding basted on?
13. Where is the basting board placed?
14. If hems are machine-stitched, how are they made?
15. How are organdy hems rolled?
16. How are edges creased in the hands?
17. How are narrow hems stayed for hand hemming?
18. How are velvets and heavy hems finished?
19. How are hem facings cut?

20. If facing is pieced, on what thread of material is the seam made?
21. Are all of the joining seams pressed open?
22. Are all of the seams stitched?
23. What is done to the edge seam of the facing when stitched to the skirt?
24. What width should the finished seam be made?
25. How is the edge finished?
26. When is the last joining seam of the facing made, and how?
27. Can a hem be made invisible on both the right and the wrong side?
28. When is the tailor's slipstitch used?
29. How is it basted for hems?
30. How is the hem held in the hands for the stitch?
31. How long are the stitches?
32. Should the stitches be drawn tight?
33. How is a coat lining finished by hand?
34. How is the seam held?
35. How large are the stitches?

## CHAPTER 20

### Belts and Plackets

#### BELTS

It is quite important to make the belt correctly. It must be cut right, made right, and pressed right if a perfect effect is to be secured.

Belts should always be cut on the *lengthwise* thread of material and not on the crosswise. To cut a belt on the crosswise is a common error. A *crosswise*-cut belt will twist but the *lengthwise*-cut belt will always remain flat. If there is not sufficient length to make the belt on the *lengthwise*, it is advisable to piece it rather than to make it on the crosswise. A belt of sheer material should be lined, either with the same material or a plain color that matches the background, if the material is figured.

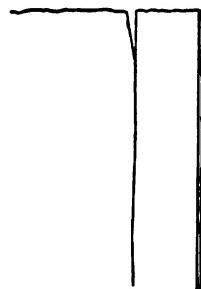
Plan to cut the belt when laying out the dress. A belt should be cut or torn down the edge of the selvage. A torn belt will assure an even width, which is quite essential. If it is not torn, be sure to measure the width and crease the line for cutting, as an uneven belt is very noticeable.

The belt will twist, even when cut correctly, if the edges are not pinned and matched on the thread of the goods the full length of the belt. Pin the edges as they lie flat on the table, then baste or stitch.

This is one of the tricks of making a perfect belt: *Press open the seam after the sides of the belt are joined and before it is turned.* This "trick" can be accomplished by first pressing back one side of the seam then placing the seam down the center of the belt and pressing it. The seam may be placed down the center of the belt or on the edge.

The end of the belt is then stitched, either with the belt seam down the center or at one side. After the end is stitched, the belt is turned.

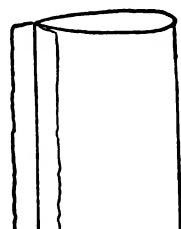
Perfect belts

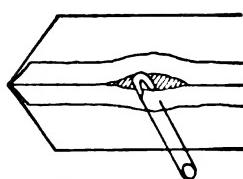
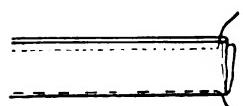
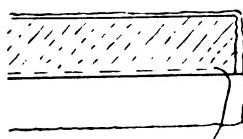
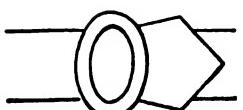


Planning the belt

Pinning the edges

Pressing open  
the seam



**BELTS AND PLACKETS****Turning the belt****Stitching belts****Leather reinforcement****Buckles**

To turn the belt, clip open a few stitches three inches from the finished point. Open the seam for an inch or more, hook a safety pin to one side of the seam and push the safety pin through the belt. Push out the point with a pencil or closed scissors. Press the finished belt according to the rules for pressing. Moisture must be used to make it lie flat with keen edges.

Belts on tailored garments are often filled with several rows of machine stitching. It is important to cut this belt of even width, as any variation in the width will be very evident when the belt is stitched.

This type of belt requires an extra reinforcement. If the belt is cut double, reinforce one half only. In this case, there will be but one seam allowed on the reinforcement.

Cut the material from preshrunk, unbleached muslin or thin tailor's canvas, cutting it on a true bias. Allow but one seam if the belt is cut double. After the belt has been pressed double to secure an edge line, baste the strip to this creased edge with matching thread, for the thread will not be removed. This basting holds the strip in place when the belt is turned.

Pin the belt together and baste the three edges of goods down the side, the two edges of the belt, and the one edge of the muslin. After it is stitched, trim off the seam as close as possible to the stitching. Turn and press.

Chalk-mark the lines for the machine stitching, as many rows as are desired. They are usually made about a quarter of an inch apart. The belt will be filled completely with the stitching. Press when finished.

Leather is often used to reinforce a belt. Commercial beltmakers will make a belt from your material with a leather backing. The home sewer must improvise. A cheap belt of this leather can be purchased, longer than the necessary length. The material is then stitched to this leather belt. The buckle may be covered with the material by using rubber cement. A professionally made buckle will be more satisfactory.

The buckle for a lapped belt will be placed on the left side of the belt, lapping the belt from the right to the left according to the rule for closing women's garments. If the buckle has a tongue, it must be pushed through the material and the end sewed over the buckle. Slide buckles will be sewed to the left side of the belt. The ends should extend at least two inches beyond the buckle when fastened. A long tab must be fastened with a snap.

Link buckles must be carefully measured with the belt. Sew one side of the link to the belt and try the belt on. Slide the other end through the link and measure the exact size before cutting.

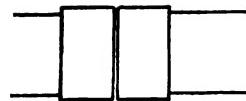
Eyelets for the belt tongue may be made by hand or by machine. For the handmade eyelets, punch the hole with a stiletto or a nut pick, making the hole the size of the tongue of the buckle. The hole is then worked with buttonhole twist either with an overcasting of close stitches or with a buttonhole stitch.

Metal eyelets may be set into the belt by a machine at a novelty shop where pleating and buttons are made. Three or four eyelets are usually sufficient. This gives the belt a tailored effect. These same eyelets can be set into the waist or yoke of the dress for lacings.

Buckles may be covered with material either by the buttonmaker or by hand. Cut a piece of material one inch larger than the buckle. Cover the fabric and buckle with rubber cement and place the fabric over the buckle with the corners on the bias portion, or the greatest curve on a curved buckle. Stretch the material over the buckle, stretching as smooth as possible at the corners and pulling out the fullness on the bias. Trim off the surplus material after it is dry, as the inside of the buckle will be covered with a separate piece. Stitches taken across the inside of the buckle will assist in holding the material in place. Cut a scrap the exact size of the buckle and paste to the inside after the surplus goods is removed; catch to the material at the edges.

It is advisable to attach the belt to the dress so that it is always in place. Attach at each underarm seam and at the center back. If the belt is not tacked to the dress in the back, it will slide to the front when the dress is put on and the dress must be removed to change it. Belts with the seam on the edge will be attached with the seam at the lower edge of the belt.

The tailored method of attaching belts is with bar tacks. This eliminates the loops at the sides and will give a loose appearance to the belt. Pin to place; fold the belt back over the finger at the seam, with the center of the belt at the waistline. Take several stitches from the belt to the side seam, holding the belt away from the seam a quarter of an inch. After several stitches have been taken, wind the thread around the stitches with the head of the needle and tack. It is not necessary to buttonhole around the thread.



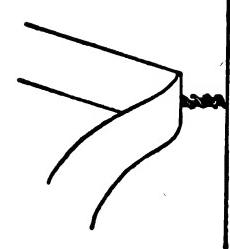
Eyelets

Metal eyelets

Making buckles

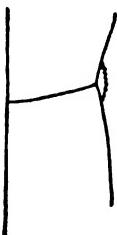
Attaching belts

Bar tacks

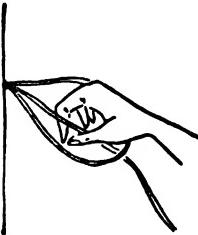


## BELTS AND PLACKETS

## Winding thread loops



## Crocheting thread loops



## Tailored loops

If a thread loop is desired at the side seam, it should be made with buttonhole twist. After bringing the thread from the wrong side to conceal the knot, take a small stitch in the right side of the dress. Start the thread half the width of the belt above the waistline. Take the second stitch below the waistline at half the width of the belt. Repeat this stitch until there are at least four threads. With the head of the needle, wind the thread around and around these strands of thread. Tack at the bottom with several stitches.

Thread loops may also be crocheted with a crochet hook or with the fingers. Start the loop with the needle to tack the thread to place. Take one stitch for the first loop of thread, reach through this loop and draw out the thread into another loop and continue till a long strand is crocheted. At the end, pull the thread through the last loop to knot it and then thread the needle and tack the thread to the dress.

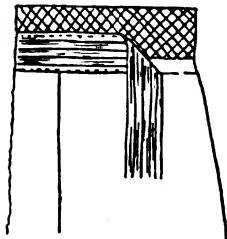
## Belting

Material may be stitched into a cloth tailored loop (see lesson on loops) and used for a belt slot. The loop is prepared and is stitched into the side seam above and below the waistline when the dress is made. This is often found in ready-made dresses.

Skirt belting is used only to stay the waistline of a skirt. If the material is heavy, which is usually the case in separate skirts, seam-binding, either of silk or cotton, should also be used to reduce the bulk of the seam.

Baste the waistline of the skirt over the belting with the belting extending at the top of the skirt. The belting and waistline lies flat. The belt is not turned until after the skirt is machine-stitched to the belting. Allow for the width of the seam, and match the belting to this line which will be the top of the skirt when the belting is turned back.

Be sure to measure the exact size of the waist and pin the belting to the skirt at this size, measuring from the finished edge of the front to the seamlne of the placket. The extra length of belting extending under the placket at the back must be allowed. Cover the seam with seam-binding pinned to place. As it is difficult to baste belting, it may be machine-stitched to place without basting if a sufficient number of pins are used to hold it in place.



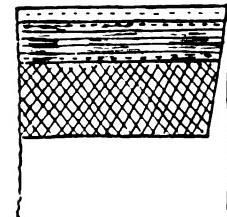
Both edges of the binding will be flat-stitched to the belting.

After the skirt is stitched to the belting, it is turned back at the top and basted flat, then it is machine-stitched one-quarter inch from the edge of the waistline. Hooks and eyes are placed after the top is finished and are slipped into the binding and sewed back before the belting is tacked to the edge of the seam.

Belts set into the dress are treated in a different manner. The inner belt, or belt lining, is finished first. The dress is assembled in two units; the complete back with waist and skirt is joined to the belt lining, and the waist and skirt of the front is also attached to the belt lining before the side seams are joined.

Assemble the waist and skirt to the belt lining with the seams on the right side of the garment. The seams are machine-stitched and pressed flat, pressing them toward the center of the belt. Prepare the outer belt by basting or pressing the seam allowance to place. It is pinned to place, matching the centers, and is then basted and machine-stitched to the dress, with the stitching on the right side of the garment.

The front section of the belt may be shaped, possibly dropping downward onto the skirt. The belt lining may be straight and is set onto the waist and skirt sections as they lie flat. The seams are pressed inward and the prepared outer belt is applied. The edges of the belt are basted back and pressed as were those of the back belt. The shaped front section is then pinned to place and slip-basted along both edges. (See *Slipstitch*.) Measure the side seams to secure accurate placement of the belt; the joining seams of the belt must match on the side seams.



**Set-in belts**

#### **Shaped belts**

## **PLACKETS**

Plackets are skirt or dress openings made at the side seam at the left of the skirt. The dress placket extends five inches into the side seam on the waist and down five to seven inches on the side seam of the skirt. This opening will permit the closely fitted waist to be slipped over the body when the garment is put on or removed. If the waist of a dress is made loose or the waistline is quite large, it will

#### **Where made**

## BELTS AND PLACKETS

not be necessary to make a placket. The figure with a very small waist requires a longer placket than does the figure with a large waistline.

The placket overlaps the back with the front edge turned under. It is closed flush with the seam and with the back edge extending under the seam. It is closed with snaps. If the waist is fitted quite close, there should be a hook and eye at the waistline.

Several kinds of slashed openings on necks and sleeves also may be termed plackets. An opening at the seam of the sleeve may be finished according to the rules for plackets, and a slashed opening either in the sleeve or at the neck might be finished with a continuous placket finish.

A slashed opening on the back edge of a sleeve laps from the front to the back. If the opening is on the seam of the sleeve which is inside of the arm, it will also lap from front to back but on the other side of the sleeve. Both openings should lap to the back.

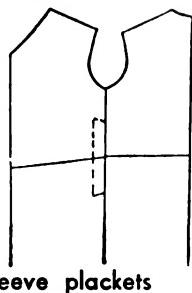
The back seam is basted to the end of the sleeve but is stitched only to the simulated placket. The basting will not be removed until the hem is pressed into the sleeve.

Plackets may be made by several methods, but only three are used in practical dressmaking. Others may be used in tailoring, but these are quite intricate. The continuous placket is used on all fabric that is not heavy. As the fabric is doubled, it will be too heavy when used on heavy materials. Heavy fabric can either be finished with a faced and bound placket or with extended seams.

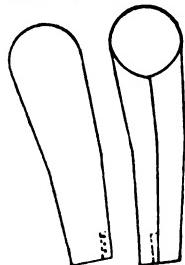
All plackets, however made, should be made on the sewing line of the garment. For this reason, the sewing line must be marked. It is advisable to baste the side seam to the top and press the seam open at the placket line to make a crease on both sides of the seam. This line must be followed.

All placket binding should be cut on the lengthwise thread of the material. Crosswise or bias binding will not lie flat and will produce a bulging effect when finished. The placket edge must not be stretched; both sides must match. This makes it advisable to pin the placket strip to the opening before it is stitched and then measure to determine the matching length.

**How lapped  
on skirt**

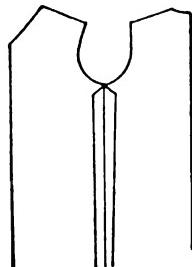


**Sleeve plackets**



**Types of plackets**

**Marking the  
sewing line**



Plackets on dresses should be finished narrow, about one-half inch wide, and usually with a continuous placket, as the stitches must not show on the right side. If the placket is made too wide it will draw on the seam at the waistline when turned back.

There are two rules for making a continuous placket. First, baste the seam closed and press it open to mark a perfect sewing line. Next, clip the skirt seam at the top of the skirt seam and at the lower end of the placket.

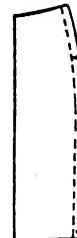
**Two rules**

When the skirt seam is stitched, stitch from the bottom upward; and when the lower end of the placket is reached, fold back the seam so that it will not feed into the needle. This will tack the seam closely and avoid the necessity of tying threads. Sew slowly when making this tacking.

**Tacking**

Continuous binding for the placket is the most popular, as it is easily and quickly made and is finished either by machine or by hand. Cut a strip of the matching silk or cotton an inch and a half wide with a selvage on one side. The selvage makes a strong edge.

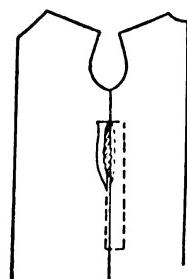
**Clipping the continuous placket seam**



When basting on the finish, hold the skirt on top and the finish strip underneath. It will not stretch so easily when basted in this manner. The seam at the hip must also be clipped into the sewing line so that the placket opening can be stretched into an opened line as the finish is applied. Trim back the sewing line to within a quarter of an inch of the crease, which should have been made when the seam was pressed back to mark the placket.

The machine-finished placket of the dress is held *right-side out*, and the finish strip is pinned *under* the dress or skirt at the top on the back portion. The seam will be on the right side. Pin the full length and place a pin *exactly* at the sewing line where the stitching ends at the bottom. To follow this procedure exactly is important.

**Finishing by machine**



Straighten the strip into a continuous line and pin the finish to the front edge. After it is pinned to place, measure to see that both edges are *exactly* the same length before stitching. This may prevent later ripping. Baste and stitch, following the sewing lines on the dress; and be sure to stitch to the *point*. Watch the bottom. Be sure not to twist the material when stitching. The finish should be straight and flat.

Follow the same method as explained in machine-finished plackets, but turn the dress to the wrong side rather than

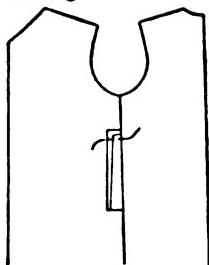
**Hand-finishing**

## BELTS AND PLACKETS

the right side. This will make the first seam on the wrong side of the garment rather than on the right side, as it is made in the machine finish. The final finish will be made on the wrong side, while the machine finish is on the right side.

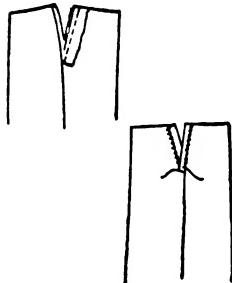
Cut the material on the lengthwise thread and baste it on by the same method, starting at the top and pinning to the bottom to the clipped seam and up the front edge. Test to determine if both edges match. Stitch and then finish by hand with a slipstitch.

Pressing



Turn the dress to the wrong side for both types of plackets. Baste or pin the two top edges of the finish together while the binding is open, then machine-stitch across them twice. Trim off. The front edge will then be pressed *under* the front, and the back edge will extend. The snaps can be sewed to the finish without the stitches being visible.

Facing and binding



This finish is used on heavier materials and is made with two short strips rather than with one long strip. The front strip is cut one and a half inches wide and the back two and a half inches wide. They are both made one-half inch longer than the opening. This placket will be finished on the wrong side and will also be cut on the lengthwise thread of material.

Baste with the dress rightside out and with the placket held on top. Pin to position, measure to determine if both edges match in length, and baste on the sewing line of the garment. Machine-stitch; *press the seam open* before turning it back. Baste the back and the front edge and press. If the material is not too heavy, turn under the outer edge and slipstitch to the garment on the front. The edge may be pinked or bound with ribbon seam-binding.

On the back section the finish will be folded double and slipstitched to the seam. The front finish folds under; the back edge extends. Overlap the edges on the right side and pin together. Turn the skirt to the wrong side and press. Machine-stitch the two placket strips together at the bottom, or catch the back piece to the front piece. Be sure that the top of the front is the correct length when turned back.

This placket is used on heavy skirt material and must be cut into the dress. An extra inch must be allowed on the seam at the left side of the skirt on both the back and front; the front can be finished with seam-binding if necessary. If the extra allowance is not made, a single strip of material can be stitched to the back edge and the seam pressed open. One thickness of goods is used; the edge is pinked.

The sewing line must be marked at the placket line; the seam can be basted together and pressed open to secure this line. The bastings can then be removed and the perfect line is made to follow for the placket.

Turn the skirt to the wrong side and hand-sew a length of ribbon seam-binding next to the crease on the placket side on both the back and front edges. This ribbon will keep the material from stretching and will make a stay for the snaps.

Baste back the edge of the placket on the front side and catch with a few stitches. Attach the front and back lower edges of the placket together. Set the snaps and press. If the material frays, bind the edges with silk seam-binding.

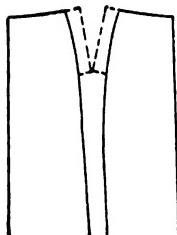
Slashed openings are often bound with the slash straightened out, stitching the binding with a narrow seam which gradually diminishes to the point on the dress side only. The binding seam remains the same width. Baste with the dress side out and the seamline visible. The slash is opened into a straight line for the first stitching. The binding is finished down with a slipstitch. A slashed opening on a neck or sleeve will be faced if small loops are used for fastening. (See section on bias binding.)

Zippers on skirt plackets are invisible. The zipper is covered by the material.

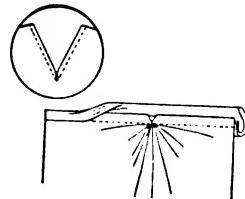
It is advisable to set the zipper toward the front of the skirt with the back edge of the skirt placket seam stitched close to the metal of the zipper, to prevent the lock from catching into the folds. A machine-cording foot is necessary to stitch close. If a cording foot cannot be purchased, keep the narrow part of the presser foot toward the zipper and stitch as close as possible.

Baste the placket opening closed and press the seam open. This will give a line for the finish. If the placket edge is quite curved, then the material will be quite bias and the

### The extended seam



### Slashed openings

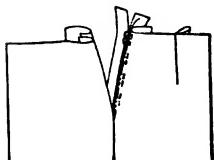


### The zipper placket

### Facing

**BELTS AND PLACKETS**

front edge should be faced to eliminate a ruffled bias edge when finished. Baste and stitch a lengthwise strip to the front edge for a facing, stitching this strip on the creased sewing line. Press the seam open; trim to a narrow width and baste back.

**The basting board**

Slide a basting board into the skirt and under the placket. Use a magazine, cardboard, or folded paper. Close the zipper. Baste zipper tape to the back edge of the placket, bringing the pressed seam edge close to the zipper edge. Baste the front-faced edge of the placket over the zipper. Use a cording foot for stitching when possible. Stitch down one side, across the bottom on the zipper tape, and up the other side. Lower the zipper lock to start stitching. When the lock is reached, lower the machine needle, raise the presser foot, and close the lock. The needle holds the stitch in place to continue the line of stitching. On closely fitted skirts it is advisable to stitch a grosgrain ribbon or flat fold of material under the zipper to prevent its catching the slip. Baste on the ribbon, turn ribbon side down, fold back the front facing edge, and machine-stitch to place. The ribbon can be cross-stitched to position.

**Trimming zipper**

Many plackets are closed with zippers that make a neat closing and form a trimming. In this case, the zipper may be visible.

**Clipping points**

The slashed opening is faced at the point with a small scrap of matching material. Cut the slash one-eighth inch shorter than necessary. Start stitching on the scrap at one-half inch or more from the point. Make the seam but one-eighth inch wide. Stitch straight down and square the corners at the end. Lower the machine needle into the seam, raise the presser foot, and swing the goods around the needle, using the needle as a pivot. Machine-stitch across the point for one-quarter inch and square the point before stitching up the other side.

Use sharp scissors. Clip to both points. Hold the thumb nail on the stitch to prevent slipping. Turn the facing back, baste, and press. Slide a small cardboard into the garment, baste on the zipper and stitch close to the edge. A machine-cording foot is necessary unless the complete opening is faced.

**QUESTIONS****Belts**

1. Why should belts not be cut on a crosswise thread?
2. When should the belt be cut?
3. Why should a belt be pinned the full length before stitching?
4. How is the long seam of the belt pressed?
5. How is the seam pressed open?
6. When is the end finished?
7. How is a belt turned?
8. When is a stay made in a belt?
9. What is used for the stay and how is it cut?
10. How is it attached to the belt?
11. Are the seams trimmed from the stay?
12. Are the seams pressed open?
13. After turning, is the belt pressed to a keen edge for stitching?
14. How are lines marked for stitching?
15. How wide are stitching spaces made?
16. Where is a buckle placed?
17. How is the buckle attached to the belt?
18. How far should the end extend?
19. What are the four methods of attaching belts to dress?
20. How are bar tacks made?
21. How are thread loops made?
22. How are thread loops made with crocheting?
23. How are tailored loops attached?
24. What can be used for belting?
25. When applying, does belting extend above the skirt?
26. Which way is the seam pressed?
27. When is the belt turned under?
28. How is it held down?
29. When are hooks and eyes sewed on?
30. What is the first step in applying a set-in belt?
31. How is the outer belt edge treated?
32. How is it basted to place?
33. What simplifies the flat-stitching?
34. When are the side seams joined?

**Plackets**

1. When can a placket be omitted?
2. How does the placket lap?
3. When is a hook and eye used?
4. How does a slashed opening in a sleeve lap?
5. How does the opening on a sleeve seam lap?
6. Which one of the plackets is most used?

7. When is the continuous placket used?
8. How are heavy plackets finished?
9. What thread of material is followed for cutting?
10. How should a placket finish be pinned to place before stitching?
11. What happens if the placket is made too wide?
12. Which is the easiest placket to make?
13. How wide is it cut?
14. How is the binding held when basting?
15. What is done to the hip seam at the end of the placket?
16. What two finishes are used for a continuous placket?
17. Is the dress right or wrong side out for the basting for machine finish?
18. Where is the basting started?
19. What line is followed for the basting?
20. How is the final finish made?
21. Is the dress right or wrong side out for a hand-finished placket?
22. Is the seam on the right or the wrong side?
23. How is the inside finished and folded?
24. When is the placket faced and bound?
25. How wide are the strips cut?
26. When is the final finish made?
27. What kind of material requires this placket?
28. How is the dress turned for basting?
29. Which way is the seam pressed?
30. How is the edge of the front facing finished?
31. Is the finish folded double on the back edge?
32. How is the placket handled for the final pressing?
33. How is an extended seam placket cut?
34. How can it be finished if a seam has not been allowed?
35. What should be done to the sewing line?
36. Where is ribbon binding placed?
37. Why is it used?
38. How are slashed openings bound?

**PART V**

**Tailoring**



## CHAPTER 21

### Tailoring a Coat

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#### GENERAL RULES FOR TAILORING

Making a lined coat is not difficult if factory methods are followed. The front facing is machine-stitched to the lining *before* it is stitched to the coat. Actually *two coats* are made—the outer coat and the inner coat. Each is finished complete with a collar section and sleeves before the lining is attached to the coat.

A coat or suit can be made as easily as a silk dress if these rules for tailoring are followed accurately. More time is required for pressing and marking sewing lines than in dressmaking, but if each problem is perfected as it is encountered, and the coat is made and assembled as herein directed, it can easily be made at home.

Tailoring requires more accuracy than does dressmaking. All sewing lines must be marked, matched perfectly, basted closely, and stitched straight. The iron must be used frequently—pressing before basting, pressing before stitching and pressing after stitching. Haphazard methods that might be used in some dressmaking do not produce perfect results in tailoring.

“Dressmaker coats” are coats made with softer, less severe lines than are coats made with mannish tailoring. The padded shoulders and fronts made of heavy tailor’s canvas used years ago in all tailored coats are not used in modern tailoring. The padded bust forms are omitted, and even if a thin piece of tailor’s canvas is used down the front of the mannish tailored coats, or the buttonholes are worked by hand, a careful dressmaker can make these garments beautifully.

**Tailoring is easy**

**Accuracy required**

**Modern tailoring**

**Learning to  
tailor wool**

Lessons on tailoring should be learned by working on woolen material. The same rules will apply to tailoring cottons, silks, and linens, but the full effect of the accurate methods can better be obtained by using wool. It is the constant pressing that perfects tailoring, and as wool is easily pressed with perfect results, it is easier to tailor wool than any other material. The rules for pressing silk and velvet are quite different, and if the pressing is not done perfectly the garment will look homemade.

**Nap and pile**

While the nap and pile material is not so difficult to sew, it does require extra precaution when cutting. Plaids and stripes must also be cut and matched carefully and should be sewed carefully to secure the desired effect. (See section on materials.)

**Loose weaves**

Loosely woven fabrics must also be handled carefully as they will stretch on the bias and will fray on clipped corners. Loose weaves should be well shrunk before they are made.

**Tailoring velvet**

Tailoring velvet or velveteen should only be attempted after a coat has been made of wool, and after the rules for pressing velvet are fully understood. (See section on pressing.)

**Tailoring silk**

A silk coat can usually be made according to the rules for dressmaking, but collars, cuffs, pockets, and linings will be made and applied as in the rules for tailoring. The pressing will be as frequent but it will be done differently. (See section on pressing.)

**Pressing silk**

Practice pressing silk on a sample. Some silks will water spot and the moisture must be used carefully. Place the seam or hem on the pressboard. Place a dry cloth over the seam to be pressed. Brush over this dry cloth with a sponge or small wet cloth that has been wrung almost dry. Press the dry cloth over the seam. The small amount of moisture that will be absorbed into the dry cloth will be all that is necessary to press the seam or hem to a keen edge. If the first pressing does not press the edge flat, repeat the operation.

**Opening the seams**

All seams should be pressed open in tailoring unless the seams are to be flat-stitched. If flat-stitched, the seam is first stitched on the wrong side; it is then pressed to one side, is flat-stitched from the right side, and is then pressed again.

Bastings should always be removed after stitching and before the seam is either pressed open or pressed flat. Clip the threads of the basting and draw them out with closed

scissor points or a safety pin. Do not use the needle to remove bastings as this will bend the needle and ruin it for straight sewing.

All woolen material must be shrunk before it is made. The selvage must also be cut from the edges before shrinking. To test the material to ascertain if the material has been preshrunk, place one corner on the pressboard and place a wet cloth over it. Set the warm iron on the wet cloth and permit it to steam through to the wool. Lift the iron and cloth and see if the goods has shrunk around the iron mark. It will be drawn up at this spot if the goods needs shrinking. If it remains flat and smooth it has been preshrunk and is ready to use after the selvage is removed. (See section on shrinking.)

Check the pattern to determine whether any adjustments are necessary. Carefully follow the pattern layout, unless the adjusted pattern makes it impractical. A safe rule to follow is to cut all sections of the pattern running in one direction. (See section on cutting intricate materials.)

All seams should be marked on the sewing line with either tailor's or dressmaker's tacks. The latter are quicker and easier to make and are made along a chalk line marked on the goods. (See section on marking sewing lines.) Use a double thread. Baste down the line to be marked, catching one close stitch; then skip a two-inch space and take another close stitch. Continue to the end of the line. Then clip all the long threads apart that are joining the stitches. (See section on stitches.)

Be sure to open the seam on the side and not at the end. Open the seam so that the stitches are visible, then draw the seam apart one quarter of an inch and clip the threads apart. After the two edges are separated, clip off the long threads on the top of the goods. The short threads will remain in the material better than the long threads.

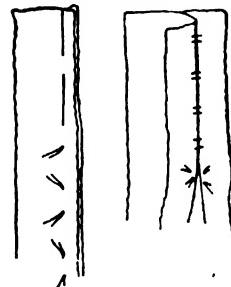
All inner sewing lines in tailoring must be marked; as wool is too heavy to crease-mark, it is advisable to thread-mark. (See Part II.) After the thread marks have been matched and pinned together in making a seam or dart, chalk-mark before basting and stitching, marking with tailor's chalk and ruler.

Testing for shrinking



Checking the pattern

Marking sewing lines



Marking darts



## TAILORING A COAT

**Marking all  
sewing lines**

Both sides of the coat must be made alike and perfect sewing lines must be followed. Therefore use a ruler or yardstick and chalk-mark all sewing lines, and then thread-tack. In tailoring, even more than in dressmaking, much of the success depends upon the accuracy with which the sewing lines are followed.

**Joining the seams**

Baste all portions as they lie flat on the table. Assemble the back of the coat complete, if there are several sections. Match one seam over the other, carefully matching the sewing lines. Place the more bias section on top. Match the top and bottom of the seam, straighten the section to position, and then pin before basting. Pin the top and bottom of the seam before the centers are pinned.

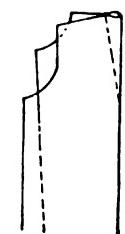
**Basting closely**

Baste the seams together closely. Loose, wide bastings cannot be used in tailoring if accurate results are desired. If the material is heavy, use heavy basting thread. Remove the pins after the seam is basted.

**Basting the darts**

All darts should be pinned together before they are basted to prevent twisting. Place the front edge of the dart on the bottom as it is the straighter edge and the back edge on top as it is more bias.

Start to pin from the bottom to the top, matching the sewing lines. To secure the correct placement, it will be necessary to turn the seam over as the pins are being placed. After the darts have been pinned and basted they are ready to stitch. Care must be taken to make the stitching without any wavering along the line. When the dart has perfectly straight lines, use a ruler and tailor's chalk to mark the sewing line, then stitch on the chalk line instead of on the basting line, or press-mark. (See section on darts.) Darts on woolen material should be slashed and pressed open, clipping almost to the point.

**Intricate seams**

Darts like those cut into the wool section must be cut into the lining. The darts are basted as indicated but are not stitched. They are pressed toward the front. The basting remains until the coat is finished. When removed, the dart provides the extra ease across the chest lining.

All intricate seams should be joined as directed in tailoring. If the seams are angular or are difficult to join perfectly, it may be necessary to use the slipstitch, basting as directed in the section on this subject. This basting will perfect any seam.

Prepare the seam, basting the edge to the wrong side over the sewing line of one single thickness of material and pressing it flat. Place the seam to which it is to be joined on the table, arrange the prepared section over it on the right side, and pin to place. Slipstitch the seam from the right side, catching a thread of the under section and sliding the needle into the fold of the upper section. Tack at the points and corners so that it will be held firmly in place and press well.

Remove the first basting, turn to the wrong side, clip in any inner points so the seam can be turned back, lift the creased seam, and stitch on the crease. If flat-stitching is to be used it will be flat-stitched *after* it is stitched on the under side of the seam.

All seams that are to be flat-stitched are first stitched on the wrong side in a regular seam. The seam is then pressed over to the side indicated for the flat-stitching and the ridges are pressed perfectly flat before the stitching is made. The thinner the material the closer to the edge the flat-stitching is made, unless otherwise designated in the pattern. The flat-stitching will be made through three thicknesses of the material; the seam is not pressed open.

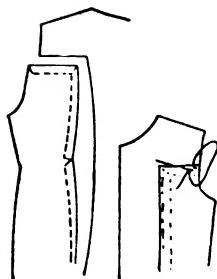
If the goods is quite heavy, it may be necessary to loosen the top tension. After the flat-stitching is completed, press the seam again with a wet cloth on the wrong side. All seams must be stitched and finished complete on each section before the side seams are joined.

Make the back of the coat complete, joining all intricate seams, making any darts, tucks, or pleats. Join the back of the waist to the back of the skirt section if the back is in two parts. Press all seams and lay aside. Make all the front complete.

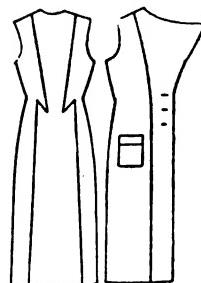
Make all bound buttonholes (see section on buttonholes) and pockets (see section on pockets) before the front is joined to the back. Make all seams of the front section, pressing and flat-stitching if directed in the pattern. The fronts should be finished complete to the final pressing before it is joined to the back or to the lining.

Bound buttonholes are made of the same material as the coat and should be made in the coat before the lining is applied. It is advisable to make a sample buttonhole first. The binding material is cut on the lengthwise thread (the

**Right-side basting**



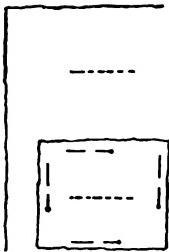
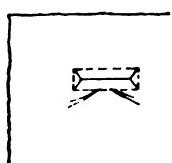
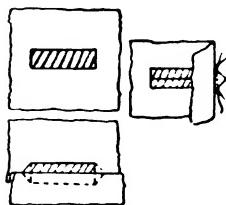
**Flat-stitching**



**Back complete—  
front complete**

**Bound buttonholes**

## TAILORING A COAT

**Stitching****Turning and pressing****Pockets****The shoulder seam**

selvage down the long side of the material). Cut the scrap at least an inch longer and at least three inches wider than the buttonhole.

Mark the line for the buttonhole with chalk and then baste with small stitches along this line, as the stitching will be made from the wrong side; but the scrap is placed on the right side of the goods. Pin the scrap to the right side, evenly spacing over the basted line, with an equal portion on each side and at each end. (See complete section on buttonholes.)

Stitch the width of the binding according to the thickness of the material. Thin material may be made with the edge but an eighth of an inch wide; heavy material may be a quarter of an inch but not wider. Gauge the stitching from the center line; stitch to the corner, lower the needle into the goods, raise the presser foot and turn the goods, lower the foot and *count the stitches across the end*. Three to five stitches are sufficient. The end stitches should touch the basted mark for the buttonhole. Repeat the perfect corner stitching, continuing down the outer side; and then *count the stitches across the other end*. This is important.

Slash the center line, leaving a point of goods at each end. Pull the goods through the slot and *press* out the opening, making perfect corners. This is one of the secrets of perfect buttonholes.

Then bring up one edge to fill half the opening and press it flat with moisture. Bring up the other edge to fill the complete opening and press.

Turn to the under side of the binding; lift the corners and stitch across the point; trim off. (See complete instructions for bound buttonholes.) After the buttonholes are made, the coat can be attached to the lining.

The amateur should use the above method for making a corded buttonhole, which is advised for coats. After the folds are pressed to position across the buttonhole, baste a heavy cotton twine into each fold, catching the bastings to the seam. The folds and cord are then machine-stitched across the ends.

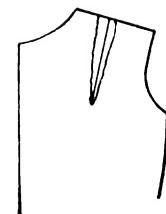
All pockets must be made before the lining is applied. (See section on pockets.)

For the set-in sleeve, the shoulder seams must be joined before the collar is attached. The shoulder darts have been basted, stitched, pressed, and trimmed off and the seam has

been pressed open, pressing any pucker at the end of the dart flat. (See section on darts.) The front shoulder seam is usually cut a trifle narrower than the back seam. The ends of the seam are matched and pinned at the sewing lines, working with the back seam uppermost. After the two ends are pinned, the seam is matched at the sewing line, pinned, basted, and stitched. The seam is then pressed open.

The back and front of the wool section are stitched at the shoulder seam. A stay tape is stitched around the armhole and neck and down the center front. Shrink a narrow cotton tape one-quarter inch wide. A half-inch tape may be split. Baste and stitch the tape on the wrong side, just outside the final sewing line. The tape remains in the garment to prevent the seams from stretching.

If the coat requires an alteration, it is advisable to run a colored basting thread down the altered seams for a guide and then rip the coat apart and make as directed. All alterations made on the coat will also be made on the lining.



#### Fitting the coat

The coat lining should be made while the coat is being made, if the easiest method is desired. A lining can be set into the coat after it is made, but the method given here is the quickest method, which is used in factories for women's coats. The tailor uses the custom-made or hand-applied method of setting in the lining *after* the coat is finished—a method that is also used on men's coats.

The coat is made complete and the lining is made complete before the outer edges are joined. Two coats are actually made and then are stitched together all around the outer edge. The outer coat is made complete with the sleeves set in and the collar attached, and then it is pressed. The lining is then stitched to the front facing and to the back of the neck facing, the sleeves are set into the lining and the collar attached, and then both coats are joined together around the outer edges.

This method of making coats is quicker than the custom-made method, but it requires great accuracy so that all seams can be joined perfectly on the inside. It cannot be used in a coat where the lining pattern differs from the pattern used for the outer fabric.

#### Two methods of lining coats

#### Quick method

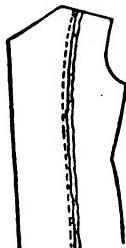
#### Accuracy of method

## TAILORING A COAT

**Front facing**

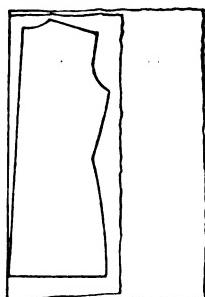
Use the front section of the coat pattern to cut the front of the lining, unless there is a special pattern for the lining. Cut off the width of the facing, allowing for the seam. Then use the remaining portion of the front pattern for the silk lining. Join the facing to the lining and press the seam flat but not open, pressing over the silk edge but not the wool edge.

The facing and lining are machine-stitched together on the wrong side, basting and stitching from the *lining* side.

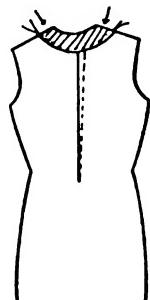
**Matching the edges**

Match the complete front of the lining to the complete front of the coat before the side seams are joined. They should match perfectly on all edges as the seams will later be sewed together on the inside of the coat.

Place the lining section on the table and over it place the outer section. Pin and stitch along all edges. Use the coat as the pattern and trim the lining to match it. Do not merely *assume* that they match, but *check* carefully.

**Back of lining**

The back of the lining must be cut larger through the center back to prevent a drawing through the shoulders. When a special lining pattern is provided, follow the instructions accompanying it. Otherwise, use the same pattern as the coat back; place it off the fold of the material, one-half inch at the neck, and slope it so that the lining is the same width as the outside at the hem. Press the extra amount over the edge of the pattern into a fold. This will be set into the coat as a fold.

**Facing in the back**

The lining will wear better if a wool facing is flat-stitched to it at the back of the neck. This facing can be cut from the back pattern if a pattern for it is not furnished. It should be cut the same width on the shoulder seam as the end of the front facing. It is machine-stitched around the raw edge of the curve; the edge is turned under and basted flat. It is then pinned and basted and flat-stitched to the silk lining that was made with the extra fold in the center. The silk can be trimmed from under the facing after stitching.

**Joining collars to coat**

Join the outer collar to the facing and the under collar to the coat along the neckline. Both of these seams will then

be pressed open. This is a step that is always required in good tailoring and yet is often omitted. If this seam is not pressed open, a bulge will develop when the two collars are placed together and the effect will be quite "homemade." Press the seams to a keen edge; clip the neck seam around the back but do not trim off the seam, as one side of the seam will be used later to hold the two collars together on the inside of the coat.

The complete length of the neck edge and collar should be carefully tested before stitching to determine if the edges will match when stitched.

If the collar is placed back from the neck edge, making a point on the revers, then the width of each point must be measured. Points on both right and left sides should be exactly the same length.

On heavy woolen fabric, the under collar should be smaller than the outer collar so that the seam will roll under when finished and will make the edge seam invisible. (See section on collars.) The under collar is trimmed off one-quarter inch around the outer edges. Notched collars will not only be trimmed on the outer edge but will also be trimmed off at the notch on the facing, gradually diminishing the trimming to nothing at the neckline. The seam will be trimmed from one-eighth to a quarter inch, depending upon the weight of the material. The thicker material will require the quarter-inch trim, while the thinner material will only need one-eighth inch.

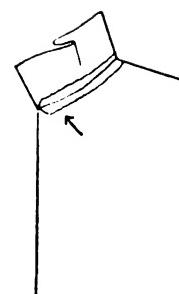
*First.* Press back all seam allowances on thread mark or chalk mark.

*Second.* As the collar seam allowance is pressed back or marked, clip off the triangular point where it joins the neck seam.

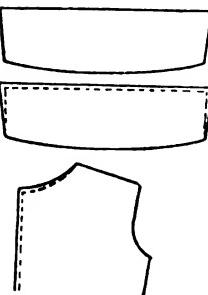
*Third.* At this point, clip into the seam allowance of the neckline to permit the edge stitching to follow around the collar, and make a right-angle turn where the collar joins the neckline to continue unbroken around the notch and down the front.

*Fourth.* Lower the machine needle at the turn, lift the presser foot and swing the material around the needle to make a perfect point.

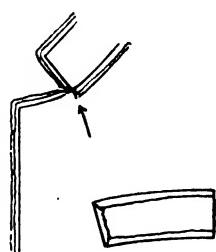
Tailored coats often have machine-stitched collars or collars made in several sections. In this case, the collar is made complete, stitched, and pressed. It is then basted to



**Rolling under**



**Notched collars**



**Stitched collars**

## TAILORING A COAT

the lining neckline. The coat neckline is then basted over all and machine-stitched. This places the back of the neck seam on the coat side of the collar.

On collars that do not have flat-stitching, it is advisable to press the neck seams open, thus distributing the seam equally on both sides of the neckline.

The underarm seam will now be joined, placing the seams flat on the table. Place the back on the bottom and lay the front sections over it. Pin the seams to place and then baste carefully, matching the sewing lines as marked or altered. Baste the same seams on the lining.

For lightweight wool, place the side seam on the press-board, flatten the seam to one side and press the seam on the coat with a damp cloth. This will give a perfectly straight line to follow for the stitching. Lift the creased seam and stitch on the crease on both the lining and the coat, then press the seam open. Heavy wool, satin, and velvet should have all seams chalk-marked with a ruler before stitching.

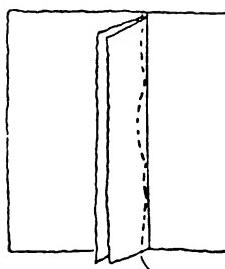
The armhole is now stayed with a narrow tape, or it can be stayed before the underarm seam is joined. This stay will hold the armhole in shape and will prevent the seams from stretching when the coat is worn. A stay tape is also stitched on the front edges and around the neck in one continuous strip; it is attached between the sewing line and the cut edge close to the sewing line.

Set the sleeve into the armhole according to the pattern notches. A quick, easy method of setting sleeves without gathers is given in the section on sleeves.

If a manly coat is being made, the fullness around the sleeve cap must be shrunk out before the sleeve is set. Place two rows of gathers around the sleeve cap a half inch apart. Draw up the gathers and tack to the size of the armhole. Turn the sleeve wrong side out; slide the cap over the small end of the pressboard or tailor's cushion. Place a wet cloth on it and press, shifting the gathers until all of the fullness disappears.

When the sleeves are set into the coat they should be set into the lining also. When the collar facing is attached to the coat, the collar is attached to the lining. This method will often prevent errors when alterations are made. If any alteration is made on the outer coat, the same amount should also be altered on the lining.

### Straightening the seam



### Armhole stay

### Setting the sleeve

### Tailored sleeve cap

### Working with both coat and lining

If the coat is to be interlined, this is done before the lining sections are joined. (See section on interlining.)

There will now be two perfectly matched coats—one, the outer coat with the collar facing attached; and the other the lining with the facing and outer collar attached. These two coats will now be joined around the outer edges.

Two coats

In the process of joining the coats, do not spare the pressing. Good tailoring requires much pressing. Each section should be finished and pressed complete before the next step is taken. The pressing not only perfects the work and makes the next step easier but also gives a finished effect which is encouraging as the work progresses.

## REINFORCEMENT

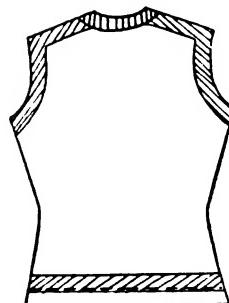
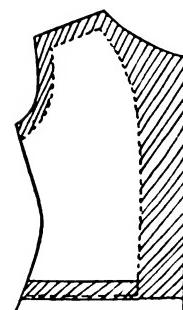
The terms interlining and reinforcement are often confused. The interlining is used to make the coat heavier and is stitched in with the seams of the lining, while the reinforcement is the tailor's canvas or preshrunk unbleached muslin that is stitched to the wool material to make the edge firm.

Reinforcement  
versus interlining

A medium weight unbleached muslin is preshrunk thoroughly, wetting it and pressing it when almost dry. If tailor's canvas is used, it should not be any heavier than the muslin. The heavy canvas is used only for mannish tailored coats. The canvas does not require shrinking.

All the edges of loosely woven material, such as light-weight tweed, should be reinforced: the front edge of the jacket or coat, the neck, the complete armhole, and the lower edge of the coat or jacket. The cap of the sleeve should also be reinforced, as well as the lower edge of the sleeve. The fullness at the cap of the sleeve should be gathered twice and shrunk out (see section on shrinking) before the bias strip of muslin is basted to the V-shaped cap. All collars and cuffs are also reinforced.

All reinforcing material should be cut on the bias; two to three inches is usually sufficient. Place the wool section on the muslin with the longest section on the most bias part of the goods. Cut off the exposed edge, remove the wool, and cut off a three-inch width following the shaped edge cut from the wool.

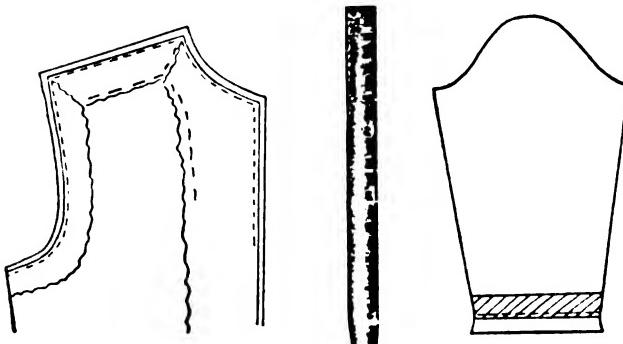


## TAILORING A COAT



The muslin is then basted to the wrong side of the edge for which it was cut. It is basted to place with the material resting flat on the table. Machine-stitch the outer edge close to the sewing line and just outside of it. This reinforcement will be caught into the seam of the wool.

After the edge is stitched the raw edge is trimmed off as closely as possible to the seam, only about an eighth of an inch remaining. The loose edge is then caught loosely to the wool with thread of a matching color.

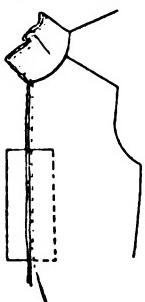


## LINING AND COAT JOINED

Joining the  
two coats

The outer coat will be placed on the table rightside up with the wrong side next to the table. The sleeves will also be turned wrong side out.

## Joining the edges



Turn all four sleeves wrong side out. Match the pressed open seams of the sleeves to the lining seams. Pin and baste from the armhole, holding the lining loosely. Sew by hand with heavy thread. Place the lining coat over the outer coat and push the lining sleeves into the coat sleeves, then pin the two coats together at the center back of the collar. Pin all joining seams of the collar. They should be perfectly matched. Slide the basting board under the edge of the coat and pin; then baste the long coat facing to the coat edge, making the edges match perfectly.

## Joining the collars

The two outer edges of the collars will now be joined together. Match the center backs and pin, then match any

points and seams. Ease the larger collar to match the smaller collar, pinning and basting from the side of the larger collar or from the facing side of the coat. Carefully watch the sewing lines, as the wider seam allowance will be followed when basting. Some of the original seam allowance has been trimmed off the under collar. The original seam on this piece is ignored. Make all seams of equal width.

The long coat edges down the front should be matched, pinned, and basted flat on the table or on the basting board. If the back and front sections of the lining and coat match perfectly, the outer edges should match.

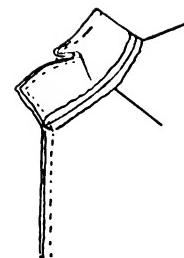
After the collar edge is stitched and the facing is joined, the edge seam must be pressed open. This is an important step which is usually omitted. A perfect edge cannot be turned unless the seam is pressed open, and the seam cannot be pressed open if it is trimmed off before it is pressed. All corners should be clipped diagonally, curves should be notched, and uneven edges should be trimmed before the coat is turned.

If the corner of a collar is small and it is difficult to press the seam open, *one side* of the seam can be pressed back. Press one edge back, then turn the material over and press the other edge back. If the seam can be opened out, it will be easier to press it flat.

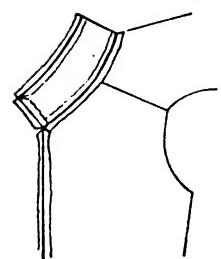
After the seam is pressed open it can be trimmed off to one-quarter inch. If the collar is curved, clip the edges with notches so that the turned seam will not develop a bulk at the edge. Clip off all outer corners and clip in all inner points, then turn the edge and baste flat.

Coat sleeves usually have a hem allowance of about an inch and a quarter for a hem; this is turned up without a seam at the edge. Even if the coat sleeve has a cuff, the sleeve is hemmed and the cuff is finished complete and then applied. Hems are also allowed on loose coat sleeves unless the lower edge is curved or shaped. A fitted facing is then used as a finish.

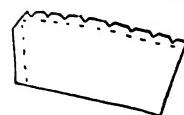
If the sleeve at the wrist is not to be finished with a cuff, the edge should be reinforced with a two-inch bias strip of



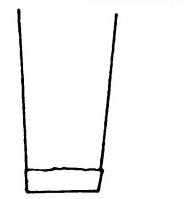
Basting the coat edge



Corners



Trimming off



Hem allowance on sleeve

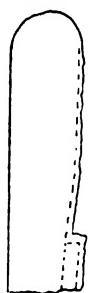


Reinforcement of sleeve

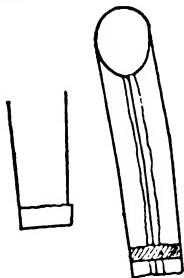
## TAILORING A COAT

thin tailor's canvas or a preshrunk bias of medium weight unbleached muslin. This is applied *after* the sleeve is sewed together. Crease back the lower edge of the coat sleeve to determine the exact sleeve length. Turn the sleeve to the wrong side and baste this strip onto the wrong side of the sleeve, using thread that matches the coat material. The stitches will remain in the coat. Baste the lower edge of the strip to the edge of the crease, not the sleeve edge, basting to the coat side and not the hem side. Hold the muslin rather close, stretching it slightly as it is basted over the heavy material; and when it is turned it will be *under* and should be smaller than the heavy material. Overlap the ends on the straight thread of the muslin and not on the bias. Catch to the seams of the coat. Leave the top edge free. Turn the hem back over the muslin and catch to place with loose stitches before the lining is brought down and over it.

**Wrist of  
mannish coat**



**Hem**



**Applied cuffs**

The wrist finish of a mannish tailored coat has a simulated opening on the back edge. Extra material is allowed on the pattern to finish this opening. When basting the back seam of this sleeve, baste straight to the edge of the sleeve and across this extra material. It is advisable to chalk-mark this line for basting, continuing the line of the side seam. Although the basting will later be removed, it is necessary for perfect tailoring.

The sleeve seam will then be stitched as directed in the pattern, stitching around the edges of the extra fold. Turn the sleeve rightside out and press up the hem, making a crease at the edge of the turning. Use a wet cloth for pressing. Turn the sleeve wrong side out and baste in the reinforcement as directed. If the material is heavy, some of the surplus material of the pleat can be trimmed away on the wrong side from the under part of the hem only. The buttons used on this sleeve are sewed through both edges of the fold but not through the lining. Remove the basting at the edge when finished.

All cuffs that are made on woolen coats should be made separate from the coat. The sleeve edge is finished with a hem and without any reinforcement. The cuff is made complete and is slipstitched to the coat edge, usually drop-

ping a trifle below the sleeve edge. Fur cuffs are made larger than the sleeve at the wrist and are caught only at the seam.

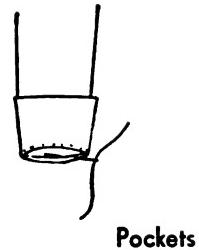
If a cuff is to be stitched to a plain dress sleeve, the cuff is cut a trifle larger and the sleeve edge is stretched to match the cuff. (See section on cuffs.)

Slot pockets, which are often made on tailored short coats, are made similar to a bound buttonhole. Tailored pockets with a welt are also easily made. The lower side of the pocket material is lifted and pressed to fill the opening, and the top section is pressed down over it. (See complete section on pockets.)

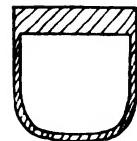
Patch pockets are lined and made complete before they are applied to the coat. All pockets are made before the front of the coat is attached to the back or the lining is joined.

If a pocket is desired in the lining of the coat, it should be made and set in before the lining is attached to the coat. One side of the pocket opening is attached to the silk material of the lining and the other side to the wool facing of the coat. (See full directions in section on pockets.)

After the outer coat is complete with the facing of the collar attached and the lining is complete with the outer collar attached, the two coats are placed on the table and the collar edges are carefully pinned together; then they are pinned down the front and basted. After the edge is stitched straight, *the seam is pressed open* before the coat is turned; then it is basted all around the edge. After the edge is finished, the lining seams and the coat seams are attached on the inside of the coat; reach up into the coat and draw them out, after pinning them from the right side.



Pockets



Lining pocket

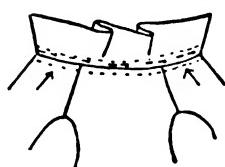
#### Joining the edges



#### JOINING LINING SEAMS TO COAT SEAMS

The neckline seam of the coat must be joined to the neckline seam of the lining on the wrong side of the coat. Pin the seams together at the neck on the right side. Bring the neckline of the facing to match the pressed-open seams of the coat neck, and pin together along the full length of the seam on the collar side of the seam, matching the centers. The two protruding edges of the seams, which will be the

#### Joining seams of neckline



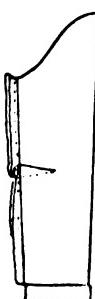
## TAILORING A COAT

lower edge of each seam at the neckline, will now be sewed together by hand with heavy thread on the wrong side. Although this step is most important it is usually omitted, and thus the collar and lining is permitted to slide out of position and produce a "homemade" appearance.

**The back of  
the armhole**



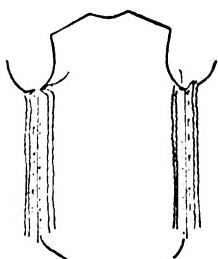
**Attaching the  
sleeve seams**



**The wrist**

The sleeve lining will now be attached to the lining of the coat on the wrong side at the underarm seam. The sleeve lining and coat are wrong side out. The sleeve seam is pinned to the coat seam of the sleeve, working from the armhole downward. When the elbow is reached, a half-inch fold is made in the lining of the sleeve seam and attached to the coat seam to make the lining looser than the coat. The two seams are then joined to within three inches of the wrist with hand sewing. The seams are joined as they are pressed open.

**Side seams**



After the seams are joined, reach into the sleeve from the coat side and turn it wrong side out. Finish the hem as directed and turn under the lining one inch from the edge and catch to the hem of the sleeve, then turn the sleeve rightside out.

The side seams of the coat and lining should now be joined together. Place the coat on the table with the lining uppermost. Place a row of pins down the side seams on the front edge of the seam; slightly stretch the seam of the coat and not the lining seam, so that the lining seam will be looser than the coat seam.

After the full length of the seam is pinned together, reach into the back of the coat and draw out this seam from the armhole. Sew the two back edges of the seam together to within six inches of the hem. Repeat on the other side seam.

The length of the coat should now be marked, and the lower edge of the front facing should be pinned to the coat while it is on the figure. Place the pins above the edge of the hem on the facing. The coat is then removed and placed on the table. The edge of the hem is basted across the front facing, basting the facing to the coat as it hangs open. Place the coat on the pressboard, lining side up; bring the hem of the facing and coat over the lining and press with a wet cloth. This will make a crease for a perfect hem across both the facing and the hem and will prevent the facing from dropping below the hemline of the coat. Remove the basting, turn the facing back to the wrong side, and baste the edges together, matching the creases; then machine-stitch or hem straight across the lower edge. If the material is heavy, the facing should be trimmed back to a seam's width. If the material is lightweight, the hem can be creased up on this line and finished as a hem then caught at the edge across the opened facing and coat.

The coat hem can be cross-stitched or slipstitched to the coat without turning under the edge at the hem, if the lining is to be attached to the coat at the hem. If the lining is to be free of the hem, then the hem will be finished with ribbon seam-binding and the lining will be hemmed and caught to the coat at the side seams.

Send the coat to the presser for the final finish or press it with a wet cloth.

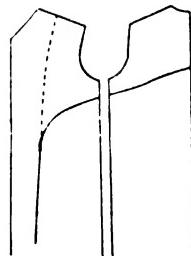
Pressing



## UNLINED COATS

Coats made without a lining should have the facing or a partial lining extend to the underarm seam for a depth of two inches at the underarm curve. The back will also be lined to this depth. This facing and lining will be made of the same material as the coat or can be extended from the regular width of the facing with lining material. In this case the lining material will also be used for the back facing below the two-inch material facing at the neck in the back. This will join to the shoulder seams of the front facing. The wool material of the facings will be flat-stitched to the lining as directed for the neck facing at the back in the lining.

Facing



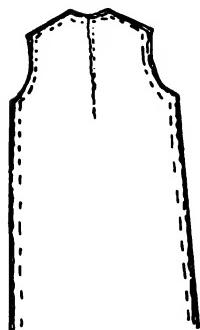
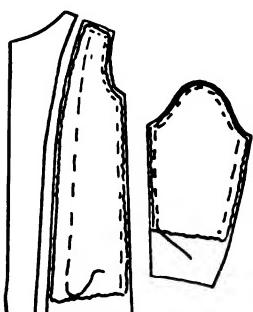
## TAILORING A COAT

**Seam finish**

The hem of the unlined coat is finished with binding. The seams are bound either with bias seam-binding or the bias binding may be made of lining material, as all the seams must be finished. The binding made from the material offers a wider width with which to work and is easier to handle.

**The hem**

The hem of the coat is hung, pressed back, and made perfectly flat without darts or gathers. (See section on making hems.) Mark off an even width and baste the binding to the hem with the basting board or a magazine placed between the hem and the coat.

**INTERLININGS****Cutting double****Cutting shorter**

A coat will be given more body and will be warmer if an interlining is added. This can be made of cotton flannel or thin interlining wool. The latter is preferable, as it gives more warmth with less bulk. Thin cotton flannel is excellent to give more body to material such as silk, if added warmth is not desired.

The interlining is cut from the pattern of the lining. Each section of the lining is opened and placed on the interlining material and basted all around the edges before it is cut. The interlining will remain basted to the lining until the side seams are joined, when all four thicknesses of material will be stitched into one seam and the seams pressed open.

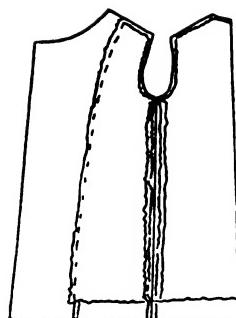
The interlining is cut much shorter than the lining, usually extending below the hips but not to the hem. The sleeves are cut only to the top of the cuff. The lower edge hangs loose from the side seams.

The center back of the lining is cut wider than the coat, and the interlining will also be cut wider; but the heavy material should not be folded into a dart. Split the center back of the interlining to below the shoulders and overlap the top to match the coat. The slash remains open for freedom through the back.

The front dart is treated in the same manner. The dart line is split and overlapped and is not folded in as it will be in the silk lining. Overlap and baste the interlining to the shoulder seam and then baste the silk.

The front facing is stitched to the front edge of the lining only, the seam is pressed flat, over toward the lining, then the interlining is caught to this seam with loose stitches before the facing is joined to the coat. It is not seamed into the seam with the lining.

The interlining is eased across the chest to eliminate any possible drawing, or darts may be cut into the interlining similar to those cut in the lining. The darts are then cut out with the edges remaining open.



## HAND-APPLIED LININGS

The lining that is applied by hand sewing is made differently. This method is used by the tailor and is used when relining coats.

If a coat is to be relined, save the old lining, rip it apart, and press it flat for a pattern. It is difficult to secure a perfect pattern for the lining without the old pattern as a guide. The new lining should be cut exactly like the old lining without allowances. If the old lining fit the coat, it will make a perfect pattern for the new lining.

Cut the lining and stitch it together on the side seams. The sleeve linings are made and set into the coat *after* the body is lined. The shoulder seam remains open until later. The side seams are also pressed open.

If a bust form is available it will be convenient to use but it is not a necessity. If the form is used, place the coat on the form wrong side out, and set the lining onto the coat.

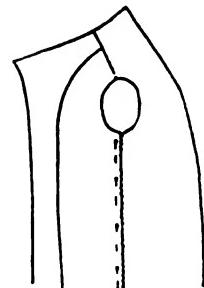
The side seams of the lining can either be machine-stitched, pressed open, and attached to the side seams of the coat as previously described, or the front sections of the lining can each be basted to the back edge of the side seams and shoulder seams as the garment lies flat on the table. The back section of the lining will then be basted over the front section, with the edges of the seams turned under, turning them at the center of the pressed-open seam of the outer coat. The lining is then slipstitched down with the tailor's slipstitch. (See section on hems.)

Slide the long basting board or magazine into the front of the coat as it is folded to the center front. Bring the lining

**Relining coats**

**The pattern**

**Cutting and stitching**



**Facing**

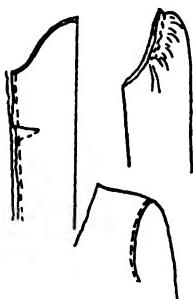
## TAILORING A COAT



The dart



Sleeves



Hand sewing

to the front and over the facing; turn under the edge of the lining and pin. Pin the full length of the facing edge before basting, as this line must be perfectly arranged without drawing. The coat again is slightly stretched so that the lining will be looser than the coat.

Fold under the dart toward the front and baste the front edge of the lining to the shoulder seam of the coat. These stitches will remain in the coat; make them on the back edge of the seam. Baste the dart shut. After it is pressed, the basting will be removed. The dart is not stitched shut, but is needed for looseness across the chest.

The back of the lining is then brought over the front at the shoulder seam, turning under all edges. It is now ready to apply by hand.

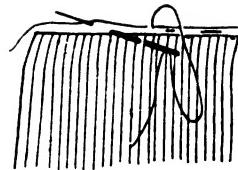
The sleeves are now set into the armhole. The coat sleeve is first turned wrong side out and the lining wrong side out. Be sure to select the lining that belongs to the sleeve; do not reverse the linings. Slide them onto the arm as they will be worn to be sure of the right lining.

The side seams of the sleeves' linings are then basted to the side seams of the coat with a tuck in the lining at the elbow to prevent any drawing on the outer sleeve. (See section on lining coats.) The seams are both pressed open and one side of the seam only is basted. Both the coat sleeve and the sleeve lining are wrong side out. (See previous method.)

There are two methods of finishing the sleeve cap. The sleeve cap can be turned back and gathered with very small stitches, and finished over the armhole of the lining after it has been basted to the armhole of the coat; or, preferably, it can be basted to the armhole with small stitches, basting to the outer edge of the pressed-open seam of the armhole as these stitches will remain. Sew close to the seam. Turn under the edge of the armhole lining, clipping it at the curve, and baste the armhole over the sleeve cap and stitch to place with the tailor's slipstitch.

The lining is set into the coat with the tailor's slipstitch. This stitch differs from the regular slipstitch in the method of holding the material while working. (See *Tailor's slipstitch—the invisible hem.*)

The edge of the lining is basted to the coat an eighth of an inch from the edge. When the slipstitch is made, fold the lining back at this joining edge so that the wool faces the worker and the lining is back from the eye. Take a stitch into the wool and on the same stitch slide the needle into a fold of the lining. Draw out the thread and repeat the stitch, a small stitch in the under seam and a slide stitch in the fold of the lining. This makes a stitch back from the edge of the fold and will make it invisible when flat.



### SUMMARY OF STEPS IN MAKING A COAT

- Be sure that wool has been shrunk.
- Remove the selvage from wool.
- Use a wet cloth when pressing wool.
- Use moisture when pressing silk, but not a wet cloth.
- Mark all sewing lines for tailoring, chalk lines, creases or thread tacks.
- Baste all seams with the material flat on the table.
- Make close basting stitches.
- Match sewing lines carefully.
- Make all darts, tucks, buttonholes, and pockets before assembling.
- Baste each step in construction.
- Straighten all seams with chalk and ruler or with a crease before stitching.
- Press each step perfectly before proceeding; leave nothing for a final pressing.
- All flat-stitching is pressed before stitching and pressed after stitching.
- Flat-stitch all seams before the back and front are assembled.
- The outer coat is made complete, collar attached and sleeves set in, leaving a raw edge all around the outer edge.
- The facing is stitched to the lining, a collar is attached, and the sleeves are set in complete.
- The outer coat is fitted on the side seams and shoulders.
- Any alterations made on the outer coat are duplicated on the lining.
- Alterations are made in colored thread.
- Finish the outer coat, the coat lining and facing complete and press.
- Finish the lining complete and press.
- Match the outer edges with the coat and lining flat on the table.
- Stitch the edge of the coat from the bottom at the hem, up the front, around the collar, and down the other side to the hem.
- Be sure to press this seam open.*
- Turn the coat to the right side after the seam has been pressed open.*
- Baste all around the edge and press again.*
- Flat-stitch the edge if required, and press again.*

### Interlining

The interlining is cut from the pattern of the lining or from the actual lining sections.

Each section of the interlining is basted to a lining section.

This makes a *heavy* lining for the coat.

Interlining is *not* basted to the seams of the outer coat in women's coats.

The lining only is attached to the outer coat on the seams.

### Attaching Lining to Coat

The lining and coat are attached on the seams by reaching up into the coat and drawing down the seams.

The seams are first pinned together from the right side of the lining.

The seams are joined with heavy thread and hand sewing.

### Joining Coat Seams to Lining Seams

Join the two neck seams of the collar.

Join the back seams of the armholes.

Join the sleeve underarm seams.

Join the back edge of the side seams of the coat.

Hang the coat after the lining is attached.

Finish the coat hem with silk seam-binding.

Hem the lining separately.

See details of all steps in this chapter.

## CHAPTER 22

### Tailoring Fur

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Fur is handled in a different manner than is cloth, both in cutting and sewing. A pattern of cloth must first be made to secure the exact pattern for the fur. All of the alterations must be made on the cloth pattern. The fur is then matched and cut to fit the pattern.

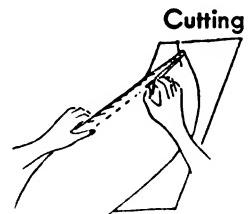
Fur collars are made with the fur running toward the center back or straight down. Wide, shaped collars are made with the fur running down. Cuffs are made with the fur running from the front to the back on the top of the cuff. The upper part of the pelt is heavier than the under side, and this quality of the fur should be matched when joining.

It is necessary to cut fur in numerous pieces to match the quality and color. Determine the section to be cut out, make a pencil line for the cutting and cut from the pelt side, cutting with a razor blade, pinning the top edge of the pelt to the basting board and cutting downward as the pelt is held away from the board. This prevents cutting any of the long hair of the fur.

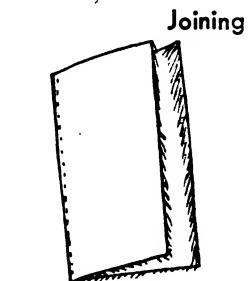
Fur machines are used for joining fur in manufacturing, but the home sewer does not have this convenience and must join it by hand. The pelt is laid with the furs together and the seam is overcast closely with firm thread. Do not use heavy thread, as it will cut the fur. Use short strands of thread in the needle, and you will find that the work will progress more rapidly. If the fur has a thin pelt, use a fine needle so as not to split the pelt.

Fur requires padding to give the desired effect of softness, hence it is necessary to pad the collars and cuffs and sometimes the whole coat. Cotton sheet wadding is used; it can

The pattern



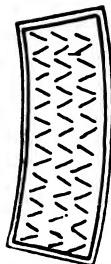
Cutting



Joining

Padding

## TAILORING FUR



be purchased at the lining counter of any department store. Two thicknesses makes a normal padding, four sheets makes a thick padding; the amount to use will depend upon the thickness desired: the thicker the padding, the thicker the fur appears.

Fur cloth is handled the same as fur when making a collar and cuffs. The same padding and edge finish will be used to give it more body.

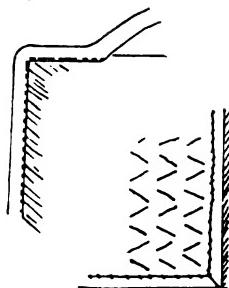
The sheet wadding will be cut to fit the collar, patching the under pieces if so desired, as it will all be caught to the pelt. The outer sheet should not be pieced. Do not overlap the cotton. Catch the cotton to the pelt side of the fur with a staggered stitch, taking first a stitch on an upper line and then a stitch on a lower line, working from the right to the left. Make the stitches about two inches apart. Continue until all the cotton is held to the pelt.

If the collar or cuffs are shaped with darts, these darts should be cut out of the wadding so as not to make it too thick. Catch the edges to the pelt.

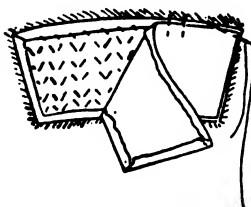
The edge of the fur must be faced back with half-inch cotton tape. Machine-stitch or overcast the tape flat and as close as possible to the edge of the fur, with the tape extending over the edge. The corners of the tape will be mitered when the corners are turned and will not be cut off.

The cotton wadding should extend under the tape as it is turned back and caught to the wadding. The tape is not caught through to the pelt when finished. Fell the tape down, rolling the fur over the edge as it rests in place flat to the cotton.

**Finishing the edge**



**Attaching the collar**



The lining is now ready to apply to the fur collar. The coat or the lining is applied to the collar rather than the collar to the coat.

Pin the lining of the collar to place, pin under the edges, and baste to position. Sew from the lining side of the collar. Apply with a slipstitch. Slide the needle into a fold of the lining and catch to a few threads of the tape on the fur. Repeat until the lining is completely attached.

The collar is sewed to the coat in the same manner. It should be sewed with heavy thread. Sew the neck of the coat to the collar, catching the tape edge of the fur. Tack securely. The fur side is held to the back and the coat to the front when sewing fur to the coat.

Large fur collars that are melon-shaped should have the lining caught up to the pelt of the fur on the under side to hold it in place so that the lining will not drop. The stitches are made as invisible as possible.

Worn sections in fur coats can be replaced by purchasing pelts from the furrier to match. Cut out the worn spots and cut a pattern to fit; then cut a new section and sew in as directed.

**Large collars**

**Replacing worn  
sections in fur coats**

## CHAPTER 23

### Tailoring Pockets, Cuffs, and Shields

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#### POCKETS

##### A practical pocket



Many kinds of pockets are used in tailoring, but many of them are quite difficult to make and are usually used only by the tailor. Slot pockets are as easy to make as bound buttonholes and are made quite similarly. They give an additional touch of trimming to many tailored dresses and dressmaker coats, especially the tailored pocket with a welt.

As all material works somewhat differently, it is advisable to make a sample pocket of the material of the garment before making the pocket. Carefully follow each step as given, and the pocket develops so perfectly that it will be a pleasure to make it.

Each step of the pocket construction will be pressed; therefore, carefully follow the directions for each step of the pressing, as the iron saves much time and perfects the work quickly.

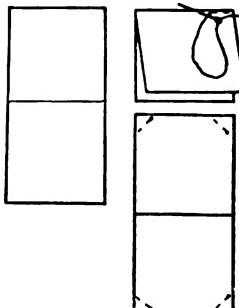
Both sides of the garment should be marked for the pocket slot, marking with tailor's tacks. Do not depend upon measurements for placing pockets evenly.

For example: Make a sample pocket four inches wide; the welt, or top of the pocket, will be three-quarters inch deep. The pocket material will be cut five inches wide and ten inches long. This should be cut on the lengthwise of the goods.

Press the pocket material in half across the width, folding the wrong sides together for the crease. If there is a stripe or a cord in the material, be sure to press mark on the *straight line* of the cord or the stripe.

Apply the *right* side of the pocket material to the basted line on the *right* side of the garment, matching the crease to the line with the right sides of the material together.

##### Making a sample pocket



Slipstitch the crease to the basted line on the dress. If this line is not straight, the threads in the welt of the pocket will be crooked.

Open the pocket piece and pin at the top and bottom. Half will now be above and half below the line. The basted line will be covered. Pin all four corners of the pocket material to place.

Turn the garment to the wrong side (or use sample material) and chalk-mark the box opening or welt (as illustrated), making the basted line through the center. Mark a straight line at one-half inch above the basted line and also at one-quarter inch below the line. Mark off the ends so as to make a four-inch length on each line. Machine-stitch around the lines, starting in the center of one long side; when the corners are reached, lower the needle into the corner, lift the presser foot of the machine, and turn, using the needle as a pivot.

Count the stitches across the end so that both ends will be made the same. Make each corner true; continue stitching down the second long side and overlap the stitches. The lines should be equally spaced.

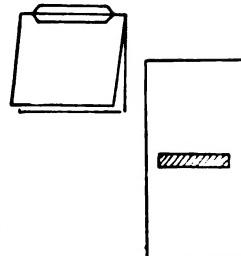
The center line will now be slashed, starting at the center and not at the end. Slash to within one-half inch of the end and then clip to the corners. Repeat the operation on the other end. This point will be used later to hold the pocket in place. Be sure not to clip the machine-stitching. If this should occur, restitch on the same line.

Turn to the wrong side, draw through the material, and press out the opening into four true corners.

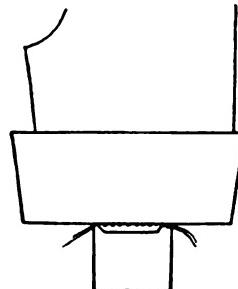
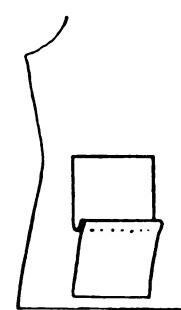
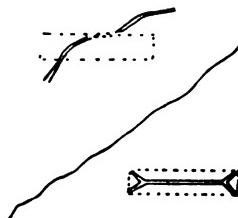
Lift the lower section and bring it up to fill the opening, press open the lower seam, then turn back and press flat. This will press the welt in place, filling the opening completely.

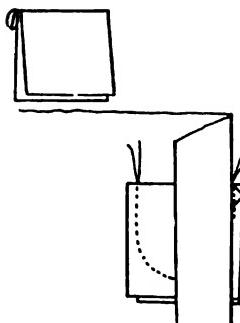
This next step is important and is easily forgotten. Pin the lower edge of the welt to the pocket on the welt side of the seam; turn the garment with the pocket side down on the machine, fold back the front or dress side of the pocket, and machine-stitch across this lower seam to hold the welt to the pocket. The stitches are not visible on the right side.

Place the pocket on the pressboard with the right side down and press the back of the pocket, folding down the upper section of the pocket material to press the pocket together.



**Stitching**

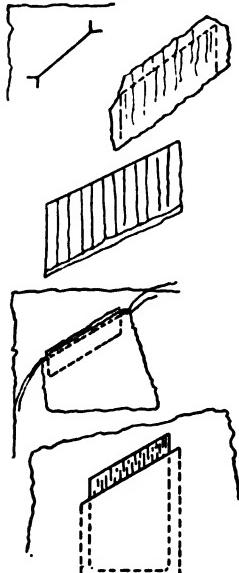


**Stitching the ends**

The ends of the pocket are now ready to be stitched. Place the pocket wrong side down on the machine; fold back the dress away from the points that were clipped at the ends. Start to stitch at the top of the point, stitching from the point side of the seam. Machine-stitch over the point and continue down around the pocket to shape it and up to the other point and across it. Follow the first row of machine stitches made previously across the point. If the stitches are made too far back, the pocket will bulge.

This finishes the pocket. Trim off the shaped edge as desired. The edges can be overcast. With a little practice, this pocket can be made complete in five minutes.

If the dress is trimmed in a contrasting material the welt can be made of this material by using two separate pieces on the back, each piece five inches long, using the upper section of the dress material and the lower section of the contrasting material. The two pieces are placed along the basted line for the pocket. If there are stripes in the dress material, this top section must match the stripes perfectly when placed on the basting, as this will be the joining seam of the pocket and garment. Make the pocket as directed. The trimming material will be at the bottom and will be brought up to fill the opening with its welt. The top section will be the back section of the pocket and should match the dress.

**Applied welt**

A separate pocket welt is made, turned, and pressed before it is set into the slashed opening. This pocket is used on tailoring and is more difficult to make than the one just described. This pocket is also used on diagonal openings.

The pocket is marked and the opening is slashed and clipped to the corners. A straight piece of tailor's canvas is basted to the back of the opening. Make the welt according to the pattern (see illustration). It is stayed with an extra piece of thin tailor's canvas inside. Clip the corners and turn, pressing flat, before basting to the opening. If it is flat-stitched, this should also be done before applying. Baste the welt to the slashed opening of the pocket together with the front of the pocket as cut from the pattern.

On the matching side of the pocket, or upper edge, baste the lining side of the pocket with the edges meeting along the basted line for the pocket opening. Stitch down both sides and across the ends. Turn to the wrong side, pull out the welt, and press. Hold the pocket in position with pins and then baste and stitch around the edges, stitching

across the points if flat-stitched, or slipstitch down. Machine-stitch around the under side of the pocket.

A curved pocket can be made either like a bound button-hole with a narrow binding or with a shaped welt according to the rules for an applied welt. The former is easier to make. Mark the pocket according to the pattern or, when remodeling, mark a pocket with a saucer, beginning and ending the pocket on the straight thread of the material.

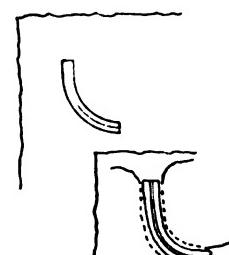
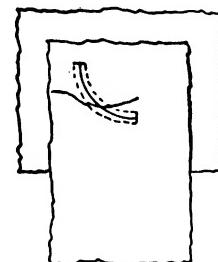
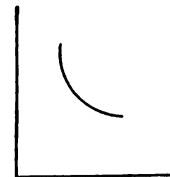
As this line in the pocket will run on a bias line on the garment, it is advisable to baste a straight strip across the back of the pocket edge for a stay to keep the edge from stretching. Baste this cotton or linen strip across the back of the pocket edge, then baste the line through both the coat and the stay. The tailor's tacks will give the line of the pocket for the first placement.

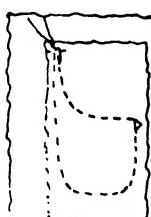
Select a lengthwise piece of the coat material that will be three times the length of the pocket and two inches wider, measuring on the straight thread of the material. Turn the coat to the *right* side and place the pocket section on the goods with the right side of the scrap to the right side of the coat and with the top of the scrap extending two inches above the top of the pocket mark. Keep the threads of material matching.

Pin and baste to place and then turn to the wrong side and machine-stitch the curve, keeping a quarter inch from the center line. Stitch across the ends even with the straight thread of the goods. The space between the stitched lines will be one-half inch, the bound edges one-fourth inch. Slash open the center line along the first basting, starting at the center of the pocket, and clip to within a half inch of the ends. Clip to each point. This point of goods will be used later. Pull the pocket material through the opening. Press back the corners. Be sure to press them into true points—much of the success of the pocket depends upon true corners.

Baste back the edges of the pocket and make a simulated binding, basting the edge an even width at one-quarter inch. One edge should fill only half the opening. As the curve is cut on the bias and the binding material was placed on the same thread as the garment, the binding will also be cut on the bias and can be rolled back to shape itself to the curve. This could not be done if the edge was cut on the straight. Baste the other side of the pocket, making true corners. Cross-stitch the edges together and press flat.

### Curved pockets



**Stitching the edge**

Before the lower section is brought to the top the binding on the lower edge must be machine-stitched on the right side following the crease of the curve. If the seam is pressed open, the stitching can be made in the crease of the seam. If the seam has not been pressed open, then stitch below the binding as close as possible to it.

After the lower edge is stitched, bring up the back of the pocket and baste to place, covering the opening. Then machine-stitch along the upper curve along the binding to match the lower curve, stitching through the back of the pocket. Turn to the wrong side and machine-stitch all around the pocket, stitching across the points at the ends. Trim the edges as desired.

Pockets can be bound with military braid the same as buttonholes are bound with commercial seam-binding. (See rules for bias binding.) The use of military braid requires careful basting. It is advisable to make several sample pockets first.

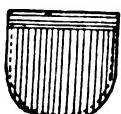
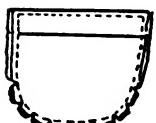
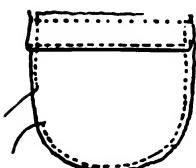
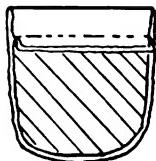
Patch pockets look easy to make, but they are easy only when they are made correctly. Otherwise many difficulties will be encountered. Patch pockets should be lined with silk like that of the coat lining. The pocket is stitched to the pocket lining, turned, and pressed before it is applied.

Cut the lining the same size as the pocket, or an inch shorter if the pocket material extends down into the lining. Trim off the edges of the lining a quarter inch, depending upon the weight of the goods. This will make the sides and end of the pocket smaller than the outer pocket so that the seam will roll under.

A pocket flap or a facing that is stitched flat to the right side must be made and finished complete before the lining is applied. Then pin the lining to place, stretching it to match the pocket. Work from the center of the lower edge of the pocket and pin and baste to place.

Stitch the lining to the pocket, starting the stitches on one straight side, and stitch around the pocket to within two inches of the beginning of the stitching on the side. Leave this space open for turning. Trim the seam quite close.

Notch the edge of the seam for turning to remove all surplus material from the seam. Turn and baste at the edge and press flat. Slipstitch the open space closed. If the pocket is on a wool coat, press well with a wet cloth. The

**Patch pockets**

pocket should be perfect before it is stitched to the coat. Baste to the coat and flat-stitch according to the pattern, usually back from the edge. Make double stitching at the ends. The pocket may also be slipstitched to the coat with invisible stitching.

A pocket should be placed in the lining of the coat when there is no pocket on the outer coat. The pocket is placed in the lining before the lining is finished to the coat. Pockets are of two types, the invisible pocket and the corded or Shirred pocket.

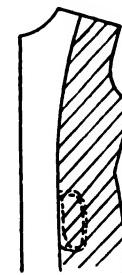
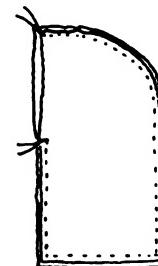
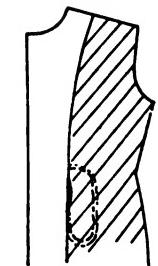
The invisible pocket is placed between the lining and coat, on the under side of the right side of the coat lining, so that it can be reached with the left hand without opening the coat. If preferred, it can be placed on the left side of the coat where it can be reached only with the coat opened. It is placed at the hipline at the edge of the lining where the lining is joined to the coat facing.

Cut two pieces of coat lining eight inches long and five inches wide. Baste and stitch together. Stitch across the top down the long edge and curving around the short end of the pocket and then up three inches on the other side. This should leave five inches for the hand opening.

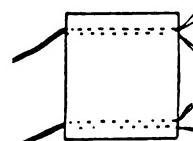
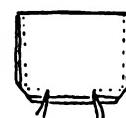
The pocket is attached to the coat at the hand opening. Machine-stitch to the edge on the wrong side of the lining; turn and press at the edge. If the lining is in the coat before the pocket is made, then the pocket seam can be cross-stitched to the lining at the edge. The lining is attached to the coat up to the pocket and then the back edge of the pocket is attached to the coat under the lining.

A pocket is often corded and applied on the right side of the lining on evening coats. It is made of a double section of lining stitched around the pocket and turned at a small opening at the lower edge. Baste and press. Stitch two rows across the top one inch from the upper edge to make a space for a cord. Also stitch two rows of stitching across the lower edge. Clip open the double material on the wrong side and draw a small cable cord through the stitched opening. There should be two rows of stitching for each cord. Draw up the pocket to the desired size and stitch to the lining.

Pockets in coat linings

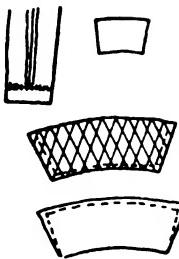


Corded pockets



## CUFFS

### Cutting and interlining



### Linings and facings

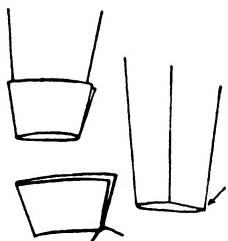
Cuffs should be cut a trifle larger than the width of the edge of the sleeve if the edges are to be joined or are to meet. This is not so important in silk as it is in heavy coats. The thickness of the coat sleeve will enlarge the size of the cuff at least a quarter of an inch. The coat sleeve is hemmed, not faced, and the cuff is made complete and then applied. This prevents a bulk of material at the wrist.

Wide coat cuffs should be interlined with tailor's canvas or muslin. Narrow, tailored cuffs are also often interlined with the kind of bias-cut canvas that is used in mannish tailoring.

It is most important to trim back the edges of the under facing of cuffs so that the edge will turn without bulging and the seams will not be visible from the right side. Trim back a quarter of an inch on both the top and the sides. This will make the cuff facing smaller than the outer cuff.

Linings or facings of coat cuffs should be made of the lining of the coat rather than a double section of the material. The lower edge of the coating should be turned back over the trimmed inner reinforcement, pressed, and the silk lining felled to it. Press perfectly before applying to the sleeve.

### Applying



Pin the cuff on the edge of the finished sleeve. Test to see that it fits perfectly. If the cuff has an opening at the back, this opening will be placed at the back of the sleeve and not at the seam. For a one-piece sleeve, fold the sleeve with the seam in the center of the wrist. Place a pin at the back edge of the fold. This will be the point where the back of the cuff will rest.

Tack the open cuff ends together on the wrong side, pin to the mark at the back of the sleeve, slide the cuff down an eighth of an inch below the edge of the sleeve, and pin all around the cuff. It will then be slipstitched to place.

## SHIELDS

### Shields

Coats often have shields covered with the same silk as the lining.

Purchase a good quality of shields. Rubberized cloth is advisable in preference to rubber. Cut the shield in two

on the curve of the arm. Using this for a pattern, cut two sections of silk, making them one-half inch or more wider than the shield on the outer curve. The cut edge of the shield of the arm curve has no seam allowance.

Hold the silk on top, basting the silk to the shield, matching the edges and easing in the silk on the bias parts. Start at the top with both the shield and silk matching; make a narrow seam. The silk will be puckered to the shield with the edges matching.

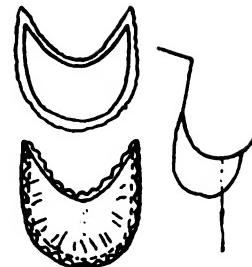
Machine-stitch this basted seam; remove the basting and turn. The silk will now roll over the edges of the shield and make a cloth edge for slipstitching to the coat lining. Do not press.

Make the other side of the shield in the same manner and turn. Place the two finished sections with the silk sides together and machine-stitch the shield back to its original joining at the underarm. There will be a raw edge of all four sections in one seam, the two parts of the shield and the two seams of the silk.

Place the shield into the coat over the finished lining, sliding the shield to the front. Pin to place with several pins. Lift the shield at the edge with the lining toward you and the shield to the back so that just the edge of the shield is visible. Then slipstitch the shield to place with the tailor's slipstitch, making the stitches invisible. Tack securely at the armhole. (See rules for tailor's slipstitched hem.)

Turn the sleeve wrong side out, and apply the other side of the shield in the same manner.

The shield can then be cross-stitched all around the edge *after* it is slipstitched. Use buttonhole twist for the cross-stitching. The edge of the pocket can also be cross-stitched. The yoke is likewise cross-stitched, as is the end of the dart.



Cross-stitching  
the shield



**PART VI**

**Materials and Trimmings**



## CHAPTER 24

### Materials

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Fabrics used in garments are made of various fibers, each of which may react differently to moisture in pressing. These reactions should be tested carefully before making any garment that must be pressed with moisture, or a garment, such as cotton or wool, that may shrink where pressed and thus ruin the desired effect.

**Shrinking**

Various fabrics are woven differently, and this fact must be considered in making garments. Sheer fabrics are seldom made into a garment with pleats or wide facings, as the showing of the wrong side through the transparency of the material may ruin the effect of the garment.

**Weave**

Sheer fabrics also have little stability on revers and collars and thus require reinforcements. Heavy tweeds are seldom gathered, or even pleated. The thickness of the material lends itself to more attractive effects in flat tailoring.

It is necessary to be more cautious when cutting some material than when cutting others, as one-way materials, plaids and stripes, large floral patterns, and napped materials develop complications different from those of plain materials. The goods should be examined and the arrangement of the pattern fully understood for the type of material before the material is cut.

**Be cautious  
when cutting**

When in doubt as to whether the material has an up and down, it is advisable to place all the sections of the pattern with the top of the pattern to the top of the goods. Many pattern layouts are arranged in this manner so that they will apply to one-way material. It is advisable, however, to determine the correct placement of each piece before cutting even the first section. If a layout shows pieces reversed, it is intended only for use when cutting a fabric without a distinct up and down.

**When in doubt**

**Never compromise**

Never compromise on the lengthwise thread when cutting intricate materials. It is advisable to piece an inconspicuous corner rather than to cut one section upside down. More of this type of material is required than material on which the pattern can be reversed. This should be borne in mind when the goods is purchased.

**Right and wrong side**

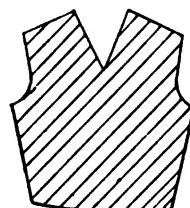
All materials that have a different surface on the wrong and right side will be easily detected. If all the pattern is laid out rightside up and all placed in one direction before the material is cut, it will be easier to avoid errors in cutting. Cutting this material one piece at a time often leads to tragic results. Place all the pattern on the goods before cutting and carefully check the number of pieces.

**Up-and-down prints**

Study figured prints to determine if the figures all run one way or if some are upside down. If all the designs are one way, then all the pattern must be placed one way on the goods. If some of the designs are upside down, then the pattern can usually be placed either way. Small designs are usually reversed and can be cut either way, but be cautious when cutting large floral patterns. These must be placed correctly on the pattern. Large plaids also require caution. Materials with a nap will have a decided up and down and must be cut with all sections placed with the top of the pattern to the top of the material.

**Diagonal weaves**

The diagonal weaves, such as serge materials, have a decided twill running diagonally across the material. Many striped materials also are printed with a diagonal stripe. If this stripe is not understood, some of the sections may be cut incorrectly, and if the material is turned to the wrong side, or is cut crosswise, the stripe will run in the opposite direction. The pattern, however, can be turned upside down and the diagonal will remain the same, but the pattern cannot be placed on the crosswise or on the wrong side unless the stripes are supposed to converge on a center line. It will then be necessary to change the thread of material for cutting. (See rules for stripes.)



All diagonal weaves will run from the high left to the low right; from the left shoulder to the right hip. If undecided as to which is the correct line, hold the piece up to the body and follow this rule for the right side. The diagonal lines will follow this rule on all sections of the garment.

When cutting bias strips for binding, be sure to make all

the lines of the diagonal run in the same direction, the short diagonal lines running across the bias strip in preference to a straight twill.

Large floral patterns should be cut with the pattern placed down the center front and the back or placed symmetrically on each side, measuring from the centers. The same is true of cutting large plaids; the center of a large block should be placed in the center of the section. Select the dominant figure and plan the pattern around it. Hold the goods up to the figure and determine the desired effect. A large figure should come below or at the sides of a neckline. The general effect of the placement of the figures determines much of the effect of the finished garment. This type of material requires more material for matching, and it is advisable to purchase an additional quarter or half yard of material.

Many lessons should be understood before attempting to make a striped or a plaid dress. Much of the beauty of the garment depends upon the perfect matching of converging lines of the stripes. The sections on right-side basting will be valuable for reference.

Work out some of those problems before making the garment.

Many plaid materials have a decided up and down; two sides of the plaid will have heavier stripes than the other two sides. This uneven plaid should be cut with all the heavy stripes at the bottom of the pattern and also so that all stripes will join on the seams. Materials with variegated stripes or Roman striped material should match on the dominant stripes, as it will be impossible to match all stripes of the pattern.

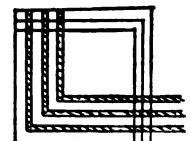
Select the pattern for a striped or plaid dress with the pattern illustrated in stripes if converging lines are desired. If a plain pattern is selected, it is advisable to pencil-mark the lines of the stripes on the tissue pattern before cutting the garment. Only a few lines are necessary, sufficient to determine the correct line to use for cutting. The line of the stripe can be marked in preference to the lengthwise thread of material as is usually found. Also mark the lines on the illustration. If the pattern illustration gives a definite line for the stripes, and some of the lines are to be changed, it is advisable to pencil-mark both the new lines on the pattern and the lines on the illustration.

**Large floral patterns**

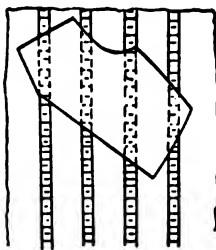
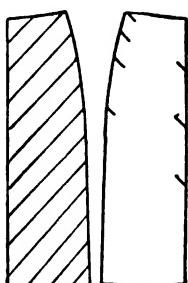


**Stripes and plaids**

**Studying the plaid or striped material**



**Selecting the pattern**

**MATERIALS****Piecing stripes****Cutting stripes  
and plaids****Wasteful cutting****Matching the  
side seams**

It is often necessary to piece the corners of material that is cut on the bias. This is especially true of cutting converging lines in the seams of striped dresses. Stripes and plaids can easily be pieced if the rules for right-side basting are followed. The piecing will then be inconspicuous.

When cutting stripes and plaids, it is advisable to cut single sections rather than to cut double, as is generally the rule. Plan the cutting carefully; then cut one side of the dress, if the center has a seam. If the pattern is placed on the right side of the material when cutting the first section, turn the goods to the wrong side and place this same pattern with the goods pinned to it for the matching section, pinning it to the matching stripe on the wrong side of the goods. This will put the wrong sides of the goods together; they will match on the center seam if the pattern has been placed so as to match the stripes.

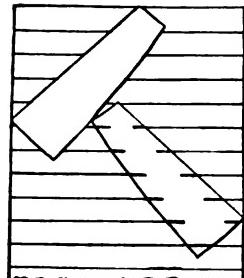
Cutting stripes and plaids is often wasteful, as the pattern must be drawn down to match the lines of the plaids. If the plaids are widely spaced, it may be necessary to waste several inches of the material for a perfect match. It is also advisable to cut wide seams for stripes and plaids, as it is sometimes necessary to slide the seam over to match a stripe. It is therefore advisable to purchase extra one-quarter to one-half yard of material if wide stripes and large plaids are to be used. Even more material should be purchased if a skirt is to be cut bias.

The side seams of stripes should also match. This makes the cutting even more difficult, but the perfect matching makes the garment attractive and is well worth the effort.

Let us assume that the back of the skirt has been cut first. Do not remove the goods from the back pattern. Press over the seam of this back section at the sewing line and place the pattern on the matching section of the front of the skirt, placing it at the sewing line of the front pattern. Then pencil-mark the same stripe on the front of the pattern, marking the dominant stripe or some definite stripe for identification when cutting. Make at least two sets of pencil marks for the stripe line on the pattern and also mark the direction in which they will run. Colored chalk or crayon makes an excellent marker.

**Cutting the front**

The front of the skirt will then be ready to place. Slide the pattern up or down on the goods so as to match the pencil mark on the side seam to the correct stripes. Pin carefully, matching the pencil-marked stripes. The second stripe is as important as the first stripe; it will determine the slope of the material and pattern. Cut one front section only; after the first one is cut, match and cut the other side as directed for cutting the back.

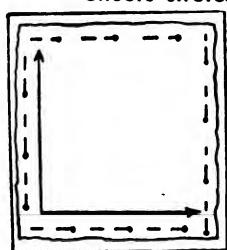
**Joining seams**

Stripes and plaids should be basted before stitching and checked to determine the correct matching of the stripes. This can best be accomplished by following the right-side basting rules or by pressing back one side of the seam and slipstitching the seam from the right side. All stripes should match perfectly.

Sheer materials are often difficult to handle. The stiff sheers such as organdy weaves will retain their shape to a certain extent and will be easier to sew than the soft sheers such as chiffons, georgettes, and voiles. It may even be necessary to first baste the goods to paper in any section but a skirt seam before stitching the seams. In this case a large table, able to hold the material to its original shape for the pinning, is necessary. The pattern should remain on the goods until it is pinned. If paper is not used, it is advisable to place the pattern onto the basted seam to test it for perfect length before stitching. If this is not done, the seam may be stretched out of shape when stitched, and the effect of the dress may be ruined. This is often the case when sewing bias edges. It may be necessary to machine-stitch the raw edges of bias pieces before they are basted. This is often helpful when making drop shoulder yoke effects and stitching the edge to hold the shape. The original pattern can be stitched into the seam and then be torn away.

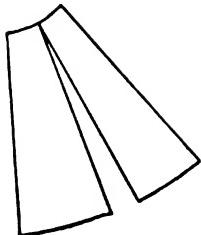
**Sheer materials**

When cutting small sections of sheer material such as bias seam-binding, it is advisable to pin the goods to a paper, straightening the material to its original thread before cutting. The lines of the newspaper can be followed to secure the straight thread of the goods. Sheer material stretches when cut and it is advisable to test the necessary width so as to allow for the stretching after it is cut. When cutting with paper, cut through both the paper and the material.

**Sheers stretch**

## MATERIALS

### **Sheers sag**



Allow ample fullness at the lower edge of the skirt when cutting from sheer material, as the bias of sheer material sags greatly. This sagging will reduce the fullness of the skirt. A skirt pattern that is only slightly circular on heavy material may be perfectly plain and straight if cut from sheer material and may not look like the pattern picture. If a circular skirt is to be full and is to be cut from sheer material, measure the lower edge of the skirt and if it is not amply wide, increase the fullness at the lower edge by splitting and spreading the pattern, spreading the pattern on the bias section only. It is advisable to ask the pattern saleswoman if the pattern is designed for sheer material—or ask the width of the hem of the skirt. Bias skirt seams should be stretched when stitching to remove sagging.

### **Basting**

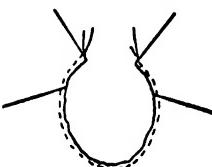
All sheer material should be basted flat on the table, never in the hands, if the seams are long. Place the more bias section uppermost. Straighten each edge to its original shape and pin to place, then baste flat.

All short seams should be pinned together as they lie flat, matching the ends of the seams first and then pinning in the centers. Be sure to match all notches when basting with sheers, as the bias edges will soon lose their shape. It is advisable to machine-stitch all raw edges of bias-cut material.

It is sometimes difficult to machine-stitch sheer materials, as the seam will pucker. Baste a strip of tissue paper along the seam, and as the machine stitches over the paper it will separate and can easily be removed.

### **Stitching with paper**

### **Necklines of sheers**



Necklines and curves of sheer fabrics should be machine-stitched around the raw edge before the finish is applied or the matching seam joined. Hold the material straight on the straight thread of the goods when stitching. (See *Machine-stitching*.) Test to determine if it lies flat after it is stitched. Slide the basting board into the neck. A magazine can be used if the basting board is not at hand.

Hems on sheer material are made narrow. They can be picoted (cutting away half of the hemstitching), or the hem can be rolled by hand. First machine-stitch the cut edge.

Stitch the hem as close to the edge as possible. Do not turn under the edge. Trim off any frayed threads, roll under the edge and slipstitch the hem, trimming off a few inches ahead of the hand sewing. Trim to an eighth of an inch from the machine stitches. If the edge is trimmed

### **Sheer hems**

### **Narrow hems on sheers**



## MATERIALS

closer and rolled smaller it will be possible to make a very small hem. Catch the end of the hem to the basting board with a pin and then make a tension on the hem as it is rolled. Push under the edge with the point of the needle, and the hem can be made as narrow as desired.

Good dressmakers finish the seams of sheers, for the garment will be transparent. All seams can either be hem-stitched and trimmed on the outer edge of the hemstitching or one edge can be turned over the other edge and slip-stitched to place or can be hemstitched for a finish. French seams may be used by the expert seamstress.

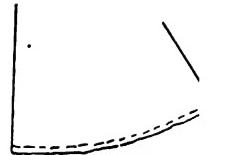
Materials such as velvets and broadcloths have a rough surface of threads. The threads are either long and pressed flat, which makes a pile fabric as in broadcloth, or the threads are shorter as in velvet, making a nap fabric. They may be very short, as in velour, and have no distinct up or down.

The difference between nap and pile can easily be detected as the hand is rubbed back and forth over the surface of the material. Pile fabrics roughen easily. The surface also becomes darker when roughened as does the surface of an Axminster rug when brushed against the pile. Camel's-hair coating also has a decided pile to the fabric and should always be cut with the pile running *down* on the material.

Napped materials have a shorter thread, which makes it more difficult to determine the correct way for cutting; the nap must run up. It requires experience to detect easily the feeling of napped material as the hand is rubbed over the goods. The difference can be seen if the material is draped over a chair, using both ends of the material for the draping. One end will appear much darker than the other end, and it is the darker material that is draped correctly. The placing of all velvet weaves should deepen the sheen of the fabric. The reverse material may be used as a contrasting trimming, but the garment should be cut with the darker sheen. *Cut all napped material with the nap running up.*

Velveteen has a nap that should run up. It is clipped so close that it is difficult to detect the correct way for cutting by feeling with the hands. Drape material to determine the darker sheen, which will be the correct way for cutting.

Velour weaves have a rough surface, but since there is no sheen to the material, it can be cut either way. A safe rule to follow, however, is to cut all napped material with the nap running *up*.



Inside fir  
of she

Nap and |

Pile fab

Nap fab

Velvet

Velour we

**Tailor's variation**

The tailor often cuts plain napped woolen material on the crosswise thread of the goods for economy in cutting. As coating is 54 inches wide, this is possible if the material is thoroughly understood. The width of the goods can thus be used for the length; the sheen is not apparent, and the pattern can be placed to better advantage. The tailor often uses insets of the reverse material on widely spaced seams. This can be tested on scraps to determine the effect desired.

**Satin**

Satin material should be well tailored. Satin cannot be ripped and altered as easily as other materials and should therefore not be attempted by the amateur. Marks of stitching and pressing are often difficult to remove.

While satin does not have a nap or pile, it does change in the sheen on the crosswise thread and can be self-trimmed beautifully. Drape the goods over a chair both lengthwise and crosswise and detect the darker and lighter shades of the goods. The lighter shade will be on the crosswise of the material. The garment is always cut on the lengthwise but can be trimmed on the crosswise. Mark any yoke or trimming sections that are to be changed when cutting. Draw new "lengthwise thread of material" on the pattern section that will be changed.

**Velvets**

Velvet is cut, basted, marked, and pressed differently from all other materials. The amateur should not attempt to make a velvet garment without first understanding the material. Upon the correct handling of velvet depends the success or failure of the garment. If handling velvet is a new experience in sewing, it is advisable to make a few samples of the various problems before the garment is made.

**Up and down**

There is a decided up and down to the velvet. It is cut with the nap running *up* which makes the garment darker in sheen. Definitely determine the top of the material and place all sections of the pattern with the top of the pattern to the top of the velvet.

**The pattern**

The pattern should be pinned to the wrong side of velvet when cutting. This will reverse all printed patterns as they are printed rightside out. All marks should be made on the lining of the velvet, which will necessitate cutting from the wrong side. As velvet does not fold to a keen edge, a center mark should be made with chalk before the material is folded, if directions are given to cut double. Single cutting is advisable. Chalk-mark the sewing lines; tailor-tack or chalk all darts, tucks, and folds. There should be

no pressed pleats in velvet, as the pleat will flatten the material when pressed.

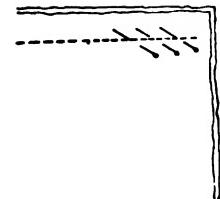
Pin all velvet seams with many pins. When the seams are pinned together, place all pins slanting to the sewing line, placing the point of the pin on the line. This slanting pin will assist in preventing the material from sliding. Pin all sections together with the material flat on the table. Match the sewing lines carefully. The full length of the seam should be pinned before it is basted. Match both ends of the seam and pin closely, as the material will slip when basting.

Baste velvet with close dressmaker's basting. The seams of velvet will slide when machine-stitched; time may be saved if the whole dress is *sewed by hand* with buttonhole twist or heavy sewing thread. The sewing should be back-stitched every few inches to hold firmly in place. If the machine is used, it is advisable to loosen the tension.

All finished bindings, facings, and hems of velvets are made by hand. All finished edges are not turned under in velvet but are cross-stitched down or finished with ribbon seam-binding. Narrow seams, such as seams under a facing or binding, are pressed open with the fingernail and are not steamed. A velvet facing is sometimes held back with an invisible running stitch to hold it flat. (See *Waist finish*.)

Velvet is not pressed flat; it must be steamed or pressed with the thumbnail or on a needle board. (See rules for pressing.)

#### Pinning



#### Dressmaker's basting

#### Finishes of velvet

#### Pressing

### QUESTIONS

1. What materials are more difficult to sew than others?
2. When in doubt what should be done with the pattern?
3. What kinds of material require more material for cutting?
4. How should material be studied for an up and down?
5. How does a diagonal line on material run?
6. Can a pattern be turned upside down on diagonal?
7. Does the crosswise and the wrong side affect the diagonal line?
8. How is a bias on diagonal cut?
9. Where should large figures in floral designs be placed?
10. How will the lesson on right-side basting be helpful in plaids?
11. Do some plaids have an up and down?
12. Which part of the plaid is down?
13. Which stripe is matched in Roman stripes?

**MATERIALS**

14. Should a plaid pattern be selected for a plaid dress?
15. If plaids are not illustrated, what should be done to the pattern?
16. How can stripes be pieced inconspicuously?
17. Should plaid sections be cut single or double?
18. How are striped sections matched for the cutting?
19. How is the striped skirt cut?
20. How is the pattern marked?
21. Is the sewing line or the cutting line matched?
22. How can sheer material be held in place?
23. How does edge stitching help when making drop shoulders?
24. How can bias be cut for sheers?
25. How can extra fullness be allowed in sheers?
26. How should sheer material be basted?
27. Is the more bias section on the top or the bottom?
28. Are the ends of the seams pinned before basting?
29. How can sheer material be held in place for stitching?
30. What can be done to the necks of sheers?
31. How are sheer seams finished?
32. How can sheer hems be rolled easily?
33. What is the difference between nap and pile?
34. How does the nap run on most material?
35. What are the two ways of detecting the direction of nap?
36. Does velveteen have a nap? How is it cut? Velours?
37. What is the tailor's variation for cutting nap?
38. How can satin be altered easily after it is pressed?
39. How can crosswise satin be used for a trimming?
40. How is velvet cut? How is the pattern pinned to it?
41. Are pleats pressed into velvet?
42. How are pins placed in a velvet seam?
43. How is velvet basted? How can time be saved in sewing?
44. Are all finishes on velvet made by hand or machine?
45. How can small seams be pressed open?
46. How is the faced edge held in place without pressing?
47. How is velvet pressed?

## CHAPTER 25

### Trimmings

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The smartness of a dress, when worn, is in its general effect. Is it suitable to the individual? Does it fit? Is it smartly trimmed?

Trimming should require careful study as to the type of trimming, the color, and the amount. Too many dresses made at home look amateurish because they are over-trimmed or incorrectly trimmed. The amateur designer, in her enthusiasm, often ruins the garment by overtrimming.

The safe rule to follow is that of "simplicity." One touch of trimming is usually all that is necessary. Tailored buttonholes, distinctive buttons, clever pockets, strips of self-trimming, twin fabrics, white edging, colored beads, novelty clips, a pin, or Shirred insets and various easily made details, give the dress that center of interest so necessary to smart clothes.

Scraps of the dress fabric can be made into smart trimmings without addition of color or matching fabric. Suggestions: Inset strips of tucking, shirring, or pleating; pockets of sheering, or small ruffles, corded loops, snails, loops, and designs. Overlapping pockets or collars, pleated edging, pleated insets. Sheering to top pockets or gores, scallops and flares, lacings, radiating darts, corded piping, and an unlimited variation of individual ideas.

Trimming suggestions are given with patterns, but it is not always possible to use a pattern. A clever touch of trimming on a remodeled dress gives the touch of interest that is so desired and often eliminates the possibility of a "homemade" look.

The fabric-department clerk or the clerk in the trimming department can offer excellent ideas for trimming if you show her the material and pattern or give her an idea as

Selection

Simplicity

Clerk's knowledge  
of trimmings

to the type of dress to be made. These clerks are carefully trained for their work. They desire to make satisfied customers, but they are instructed not to advise unless requested.

#### Contrasting materials

Contrasting material of plain color is often used in various ways as a trimming, possibly matched with buttons and a belt buckle. It may be worked into the dress in collars and cuffs, scarfs or bows, a yoke and sleeve portion; or possibly the whole sleeve is made of contrasting material. It may be used for insets and godets, pleated sections and ruffles, or possibly the whole upper portion of the waist.

The trimming material may be of the same quality as the material of the dress or of lace. It is advisable to purchase the trimming when the material is purchased as most stores stock contrasting colors for their fabrics. The color contrast varies with the seasons. If a garment is to be remodeled, it is advisable to match the fabric and the trimming.

#### Twin fabrics

Twin fabrics make an excellent trimming. Printed fabrics such as polka-dots are made in twin materials, one with dark background and light dots and the other with light background and dark dots. The dark background material is usually made into the dress and is trimmed with the other material, the latter being used for collar, cuffs, revers, belts, and ties.

#### Net

Net material can be used effectively for yokes and sleeves. It can be trimmed with folds of the dress material stitched in uniform width across the net or can follow in equal widths around the neckline of the yoke.

#### Color combinations

Colors may be used for trimming, but it is essential that the chosen color harmonize with the dress fabric. The amateur should never combine more than two colors, unless the trimming colors are meagerly used, such as various colors of buttons, multicolored braids, and so on.

The study of colors and their harmonies is complicated and should only be handled in dress design by the experienced designer. If more than two distinct colors are to be used on a dress, they should be used in small amounts. Be sure to ask the advice of the store stylist or someone who can give you helpful advice. Even two distinct colors often "clash" and ruin the pleasing effect of a dress. Again ask advice. When brilliant colors are desired, it is advisable to depend upon colored beads or a pin to give that added touch

of color, unless one is experienced in designing for the individual.

If the material is figured, the trimming material should match one of the colors of the figures; the color most becoming to the wearer should be selected. If the color is bright, a small portion is usually all that is necessary to use as a trimming. Too much color may ruin the effect of the garment. Do not overtrim the dress.

A touch of bright color can be added in various shapes and sizes of buttons. Colored seam-binding can be used in various ways, such as stitched tape for lacing through bound buttonholes, and colored edges on necklines and sleeves. Tape can be faggoted together to make fancy shaped collars and cuffs, cutting a heavy paper pattern and basting the tape to the paper in rows. Tape can be stitched in lattice effect in sleeves or yokes to form a trimming.

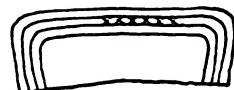
A plain crepe fabric may be trimmed with strips cut on the opposite thread of material. This offers an excellent trimming for large dresses, since it reduces the apparent expanse of the front. Dresses may be enlarged when remodeling, by using this self-trimming.

The strip should not be wide—no wider than one inch to an inch and a half. The edges should be pressed to mark the exact width the full length. A more tailored effect will be secured if the dress section is slashed on the lengthwise thread and the strip set in with seams on the wrong side. If the strip is used as a trimming on a perfect size dress, then pin the pressed strip onto the dress section and chalk-mark down each side of the strip to mark the matching seam. Remove the pinned strip and slash the center, pressing back each matching edge to mark for basting from the wrong side.

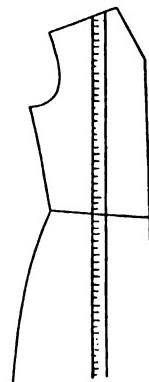
An inset may be used as a trimming to join possible piecings. It may be necessary to make a yoke section to cut the dress from the fabric available. If a yoke is made, a trimming may be used in the joining. The banding thus used may be made of bias, lengthwise or crosswise, cut from matching material, or may be made of tucked strips, or sections of shirring set in. It is advisable to use matching fabric rather than colored insets, as the amount of color used would be out of harmony with the design of the dress, unless the same color is used on other portions of the garment.

### Matching figures

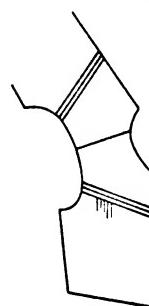
### Bright colors



### Strips cut on crosswise thread



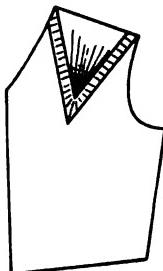
### Insets



**Strips stitched on**

Strips of bias striped material make an excellent trimming for cotton frocks. If such trimming is used, it is advisable to shrink the fabric before making.

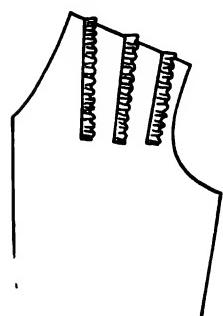
Measure carefully when cutting strips. They must be of uniform width. The bias strip should be set into a seam, but a crosswise strip can be pressed at the edge and flat-stitched to place.

**Shirred strips**

Strips of thin fabric of varying lengths can be joined and gathered on the edge quite full—at least twice the length of the space to be covered. Make shirred strips no wider than one inch, finished. Loosen the top tension and lengthen the stitch. Stitch flat from the right side and draw up the under thread. Baste to place from the wrong side.

**Tucked strips**

A section of very tiny tucking may be cut into strips and used effectively as a trimming. Tuck the width of several rows at one tucking. Press flat, then cut the strips and join them together under the tucks.

**Ruffles**

Tiny ruffles of lace, contrasting material, or self-fabric, may be used effectively. A yoke dart line may be utilized to trim effectively the front with three or four rows of tiny ruffles stitched between tiny dart lines. Several tiny darts would utilize the width of the large dart. It is advisable to press on the wrong side over a bath towel and recut the yoke after the darts are made.

Lace ruffles may be placed down each side of the center front, and used to fill completely an applied pocket or to edge a collar. The heavy cord woven into the edge is drawn up to form the ruffle.

**Fringing**

Straight strips may be fringed and set around pockets, collars, necklines, front openings, and sleeves, each producing an attractive effect. Test the fabric to determine which will produce the most effective fringing: a crosswise strip or a lengthwise strip. Cut strips one inch wide and draw threads. Fringe by pulling out threads leaving but one-fourth inch of fabric for stitching. Set between the seam as piping or on edges as a facing.

**Lacings**

Lacing can be made similar to bias loops (see *Bias loops*). Sew the end of the tubing to a very heavy darning needle

or tapestry needle. The needle must be sufficiently large to draw the tubing through a hole punched with a stiletto or possibly the point of a nut pick.

Lacing designs should first be marked with chalk or possibly a basting thread to simulate the lacing. The spacings must be even, for holes cannot be punched and then discarded.

Weave the lacing across pockets, around collar edges, sleeve edges, belt edges, front edges, or in flower or leaf designs.

Make lacing in criss-cross designs along yokes, down center fronts, on belts, and so on. A piece of white tailor's chalk may be employed to design many interesting uses for lacings.

Joining seams of yokes, pocket flaps, sleeve edges, and so on, can be trimmed with cord or corded piping. (See section on piping.) Trimming departments sell corded piping ready to set between seams and on edges. It is in the form of corded braid. A touch of bright color could be employed when using corded edging.

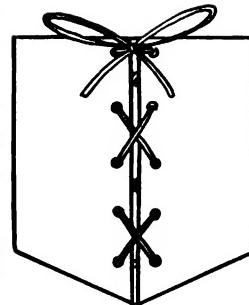
Metal eyelets can be stamped into wide box pleat trimming and a cord or tubing used to make a lacing through the eyelets. Dress fronts or neck openings can be laced in like manner. Ask the button-making department about eyelets. Eyelets can also be stamped into belts. This gives a professional touch to a tailored garment.

Yarn can be used to advantage in trimming. Shetland yarn, woven in and out on edges or marked into small flower or leaf designs, may be used. Do not burden the dress, however, with an abundance of heavy trimming.

Buttonhole twist, heavy knitting silk, or floss makes excellent trimming. Wind the bobbin with the heavy thread of a trimming color or matching color. The upper thread may be a different color; even the third color could be employed.

Chalk-mark or baste the design through to the wrong side of the fabric. Loosen the upper machine tension and lengthen the stitch. (Make a sample to test the length of the stitch and the result of the stitching.)

Stitch from the wrong side. The right side will emerge in attractive trimming couched with a diagonal thread: the trimming is the twist, the couching the upper machine thread.



**Corded pipings**

**Metal eyelets**

**Yarn**

**Buttonhole twist**

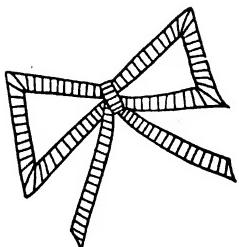
## TRIMMINGS

**Flat-stitching**

Tailored garments invite flat-stitching. Contrasting thread is often used on plain fabric, or a background color on figured fabric.

Several rows of stitching are employed. Stitch slowly and carefully. The rows must be evenly spaced. Gauge the space by the width of the presser foot.

When points are reached, lower the machine needle, raise the presser foot, and swing the point around the needle. All threads should end in a seam or be pulled through to the wrong side and tied.

**Pleated tubing****Twisted cord**

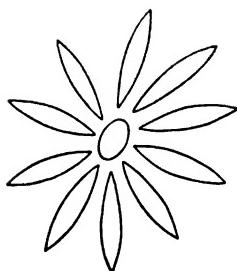
This trimming can be made in figured or plain fabric of average weight. It can be applied in attractive swirls, in bow-knots, or in flower arrangements.

Select a corset stay three-eighths to one-half inch wide, or narrower, if desired. Cut *straight* of material strips of matching fabric sufficiently wide to cover the stay plus a narrow seam. Stitch the strip to a width that will take the stay. Turn the strip with a safety pin.

Push the stay into the fold and pack it full of fabric—as tight as it will hold. Place a wet cloth over all and press both sides. *Push the tubing off* the stay to preserve the pleating. Permit it to dry thoroughly. Baste in the design desired and slipstitch the edges of the pleated tubing as it winds round and round into its design.

Figured material may be trimmed with colored tubing, which is also very effective on plain material.

Self-fabric or colors may be employed in twisted cording (made as tailored loops). Two or three colors may be twisted and slipstitched along the edges, or may be braided and attached with slipstitch. Collar edges, necklines, pocket edges, and front openings lend themselves to cord trimmings which often end in the graceful design of a bow-knot.

**Puffing**

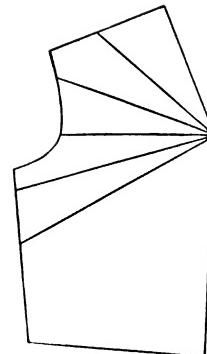
Puffing makes an attractive trimming. Baste muslin to the back of the section to be trimmed. Draw the design on the muslin; approximately one-quarter inch will be used for the puffing. Therefore, all lines will require two continuous rows of stitching.

Use a tapestry needle and Germantown yarn. Work from the muslin side. Weave the yarn between the dress section and the muslin, padding until it puffs into the desired thickness. A crochet hook is sometimes used to draw in the sections of yarn.

## Darts

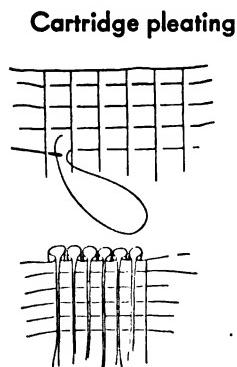
Very narrow darts can be used to advantage in trimming. Radiating darts are effective on plain crepe material. First cut a piece of paper the size of the space to be covered. Fold the paper into a fan shape, dividing it into the same number of creases as darts. Open the paper, place on the fabric and chalk-mark the ends and beginning of the lines (off the paper). Remove the paper and, with a ruler, make a continuous line joining the chalked marks.

Baste each dart on the right or the wrong side. Press all the basted darts to one side. Lift the darts and stitch on the crease. Press flat and cut out the garment.

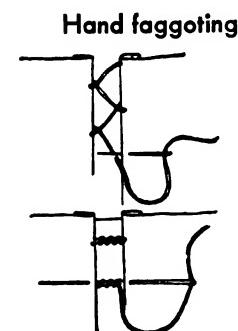


Cartridge pleats are elevated from the seam. The edge of the pleats is finished with a facing of matching material and it may be necessary to reinforce the facing with muslin. All are stitched together along the open edge of the pleats, the edge seam is pressed open, and the facing is basted and pressed flat before the stitches are made. Make several rows of small hand stitches with wide spacings through the three thicknesses of fabric, with every row directly in line. Tack after all the rows are made.

When all the threads are drawn up, the gathers will fall in lengthwise puffs, termed cartridge pleats. Baste a stay of matching fabric across the back. This stay may be used as the seam allowance, if a sleeve is cartridge-pleated at the top.

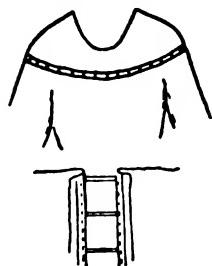


Narrow braids are usually faggoted with hand work. The braid is basted to a heavy paper pattern, leaving a quarter-inch space between the rows. Use embroidery thread or knitting silk or heavy buttonhole twist, depending upon the effect desired. The stitch can be made as a feather stitch, working from left to right, making it cross in the center, or can be made straight across the opening, catching the thread to the opposite side and winding the head of the needle around the thread back to the beginning of the stitch.



Small figured fabric can be trimmed with a plain-colored faggoting either of faggotted braid or made by hand with the stitch just described. This makes a most effective trimming, as the cut of the dress is outlined with the open-work of the faggoting design.

## Faggoted yokes

**Faggotting braid****Buttons**

Faggotting braid can be purchased by the yard at a reasonable price. The edge of the seam is basted to paper and the faggotting is basted under the edge of the material as it is folded back. Be sure to fold back more than the regular seam allowance or the garment will be too large. The center of the braid will be the center of the seam. The full seam allowance can usually be cut off before the braid is set in. After the braid is basted to the seam it is flat-stitched to place from the right side.

**Bound buttonholes**

Buttons make an attractive trimming for many dresses. If the dress is light the buttons can be darker or if the dress is figured the buttons can be selected to match one of the colors. Large buttons and small buttons, oval and round, bar-shaped and square, made of metal or glass, of bone or wood, carved and filigree, buttons covered with the matching material, either made by machine or covered by hand—there will surely be a button to suit the purpose. Buckles are often made to match the buttons and can also be covered with cloth. (See section on buttons.)

**Ties**

Bound buttonholes make a smart trimming for many tailored types of dresses. They are bound with material either like the dress or contrasting with it. Usually the button furnishes the contrast and the buttonhole is bound with the same material as the dress. When one buttonhole is used as a slot opening through which a tie or scarf is drawn, it is often bound with a contrasting material. A row of bound buttonholes furnishes a smart trimming for many tailored dresses. (See section on bound buttonholes.)

Ties also make an effective trimming when cleverly placed and made correctly. Ties can be stitched into the shoulder seam and knotted at the side, front, or back. They can be looped into a flat ascot tie at the throat or can be slipped through loops that have been stitched or cut into the neckline of the dress.

Two buttonholes can be placed close together and used as an excuse to hold a bow tie, or a tie can be caught to the neckline and drawn through these buttonholes. Ties can be made of two different colors or two shades of the same color. These can be seamed at the center back, brought to the front, and made into a tie of two shades.

Ties can be caught at the neckline with metal clips or can be run through slides which will also ornament the dress.



Ties can be made as cords and laced through buttonhole slots or metal eyelets that can be punched by the button maker. Cords can be made from braided loops and either tied or used as a necklace.

Ties should be cut correctly or they will not hang gracefully. Material for ties should be cut on the lengthwise of the goods or on the bias; never cut a tie on the crosswise thread. Ties can be cut on a true bias if they are wide, but they will reduce in width as they are stretched in the tying. A tie that is to be washed should be cut on the lengthwise rather than on the bias, especially if it is made double. A double bias tie will not press perfectly after it is washed.

Cut ties with ample fullness if they are to fall softly; thin, narrow ties are not effective. They should also be of ample length; the sheerer the material the wider the tie should be cut. When ties are cut double they are made rather narrow and are either looped or tied in a flat bow.

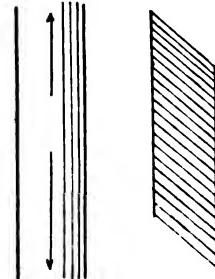
It is sometimes advisable to make a sample tie of similar material to secure the desired effect before cutting the goods. It will then be possible to secure the correct length and width; an inch extra on the width makes a difference, and a too-short tie might ruin the dress.

Plan the layout of the tie when cutting the dress. There is usually ample material for a tie if the correct length is planned when cutting the dress. Long ties cut on the bias may be pieced in the knot or at the back, but the piecing must be made along the lengthwise thread of the material. This will be on the selvage of the goods. Never piece a tie across bias or crosswise threads. Press the seam open and flat. French-seam, if the tie is of one thickness.

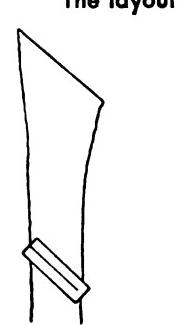
Ties can be finished on the edge with a piquot made by splitting hemstitching. They may also be hemmed by hand or with the narrow machine hemmer. Bias ties should have the raw edge stitched on the machine to hold the edge firm for the turning. A smaller and neater hem can be rolled if the edge is stitched. Do not turn under the edge, but stitch it an eighth of an inch from the cut edge.



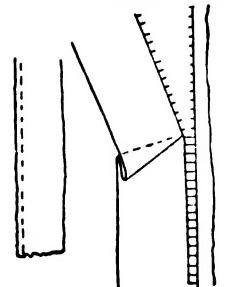
**Cutting ties**



**Making a sample**



**The layout**



**Finish of ties**

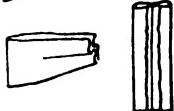
## Scarfs



Tying a bow



Tailored bow



Triangular sections of material, similar to half of a diagonally folded handkerchief, can be used as a scarf, tied either at the back or the front. Two sections can be tied together at the back of the neck and overlapped into a vest effect.

There is a trick to tying a bow perfectly. The knot overlaps one section only and should not be twisted. The two loops should be at the top of the bow and the two ends at the bottom with the cross loop straight down from the bow between the two loops.

Overlap the two ends, bringing one end up to the top; this end will be used for the cross loop. Draw the two ends as close as they will be drawn in the tie, drawing the two ends at right angles to the circle, one end straight up and the other straight down. Make the first loop with the lower end, bring the upper end down over the loop and push it through the tie to form the second loop, and draw up to position. The top section makes the overlap. Practice tying a bow around a vase or some small object; it may require some practice to understand how it should be done. A man's bow tie is tied in the same manner. Practice tying brother's tie.

A tailored bow is often used as a flat trimming; it is cut in sections and sewed to position with formal folds at each end. Velvet ribbon or double silk sections make excellent tailored bows. They require no lining, lie flat, and are very effective at the side of the neckline or in the center front. Bias strips can be made double with the seam down the center on the under side of the fold. The edges will not be pressed but will remain soft. Heavy material such as crepe and velvet make excellent tailored bows.

Cut the strips on the true bias of the material or a lengthwise, cutting the strips twice as wide and twice as long as the single loop. Two loops are used on each side.

The cross section will be half as long as the loops. Stitch each section together and turn. Do not press the seam open nor press the edges. Fold the seam down the center of the loop. Overlap the end with a fold or pleat in the center and pin to place. Do the same with the other end of the loop. Tack the two ends with the folds with the needle and thread. Make the other loop in the same manner. One continuous piece can be used if desired. Repeat the same operation for the second two loops. The under loops can be

a trifle longer than the loops on top if so desired. Fold in the edge of the cross tab, sew to back of the loop, bring over and cover the front, and finish at the back. The bow is sewed together and not tied.

Pleating is effectively used for trimming. It is often made on a matching or contrasting material. The pleating can be made very narrow and used as an edge trimming on revers, collars, cuffs, and various portions of the dress. Narrow pleating is steam-pleated by machine; it should be hemstitched for an edge finish before it is pleated. (See section on pleats.) Narrow pleating may be Shirred across the top in several rows.

## Pleating

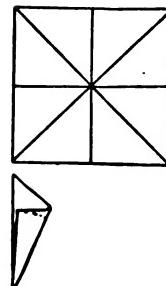
Sunburst or fan pleats can be made at home and are very attractive. They can be used as insets on skirts, in sleeves, or on revers.

Make a paper pattern of the pleats for a sample. Fold square of paper so as to cut a circle. Split the circle through the center, making but half a circle. The circle should be folded in many sections. Unfold the paper and fold it up as a fan, reversing the creases that are folded the wrong way.

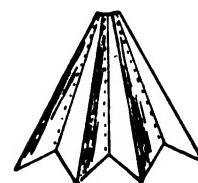
The pleated section of the material will be cut and folded in the same manner. The hem must be made before pleating. Allow for the seams at the sides. Fold up the goods and baste the outer edge of each pleat. The under edge will be automatically pressed to place when the pleats are pressed. Reverse all pleats necessary to make the fan. After they are all basted, fold all the edges even and overcast together for a final pressing. Press with moisture so that they will be steamed to position. Remove the bastings and the perfect fan pleat is ready to set into the garment.

A godet is a segment of a circle used as an inset in the garment, usually in the skirt. It is shaped like a "piece of pie." The lengthwise thread of the material is usually placed down the center of the godet with the sides on the bias. The godet will give an additional fullness to a narrow skirt, if set into a slash on both sides, or it can be used to give added fullness on a sleeve or revers collar effect. The godet is cut with two straight edges. It is basted to the slash from the point downward. The seam is made as narrow as possible at the point and graduated to a wider width at the lower edge.

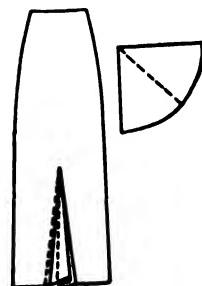
## Sunburst pleats

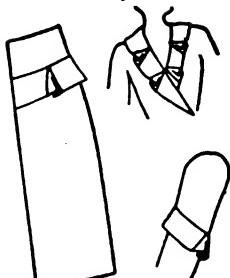


The material



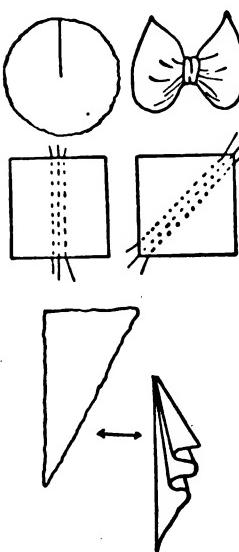
Godets



**Utilize scraps**

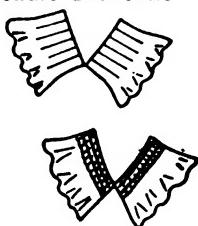
Long sections of material can be utilized by joining them with godets. These will make long circular sections that can be used for skirt tiers, or can be used to give additional length to a skirt. They can also be used to make long flared revers for the surplice neck opening or for sleeve trimmings.

Godets may be used on sleeves to increase the fullness at the lower edge, making an attractive trimming when pressed into fan pleats.

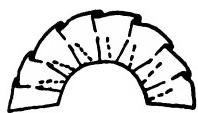
**Jabots**

Scraps of material can be used as jabots, Shirred at the side, corded in several rows, or caught to the garment on the center with a metal clip. The jabot will be the dress trimming. It can be made of lace or scraps of lace stitched together. It may be a bit of embroidery material with a piquoted edge or a fancy colored handkerchief gathered through the center either straight or on the bias.

Jabots can be made in various shapes and sizes. They are used as a trimming in the front of the dress at the neck. They are usually made of soft materials—often of lace. They should be quite full so as to fall in graceful folds. A circle can be split to the center, finished on the cut edge, gathered across the center, and caught through the center with a long clip. The points are held up on the dress and a butterfly is made. A circular lace piece makes an excellent jabot of this type.

**Collars and cuffs**

Vests, cuffs, collars, and revers can be made with varied fullness as a trimming. They may be tucked from the seam for a few inches, ending in a ruffle, making the tucks on either the right or the wrong side of the goods. Several rows of shirring can be used in the same manner, or the shirring can be corded. A space can be shirred and an inch left plain with another row of shirring before the material remains free in a frill.

**Darts**

Darts can be made in collars and cuffs to add fullness. They can be made on either the right or the wrong side. Use a straight piece of goods. The widest end of the dart is at the seam of the collar or cuff and it will be stitched only a portion of this depth with the end puffing out into fullness. This dart can be set into a plain collar or cuff pattern, split-

ting the pattern and spreading it twice the width of the dart, about one inch for each dart.

Shirring makes an effective trimming. It is used in many parts of the garment. A straight-across wide strip of material can be shirred for a collar or cuff. Material can be shirred for the top of a sleeve and the plain sleeve pattern used after the shirring is made.

To make shirring by machine, loosen the top tension, stitch several straight flat rows of stitching with the material rightside up on the machine, as it is the lower thread that will be drawn up. Keep the thread from tangling on the under side.

After all the rows are stitched, turn to the wrong side and tie the threads on one end, testing each thread to see that it is knotted. Pull out the under thread of all the rows, even them up, and wrap them *all* around the finger and gradually push up the gathers to the desired fullness. Drawing them all up at once diminishes the strain on any one thread and prevents them from breaking and also makes an even fluting of the gathers.

Use the gatherer of the sewing machine for making wider fluting and small pleating. Loosen the top tension as this thread will be removed later. Make two or more rows of gathering the desired fullness. For pleating, make the rows one-half inch apart. Press flat, remove all the stitching but the first row, and the material is pleated. Leave two or more rows in and it will be fluted between the rows.

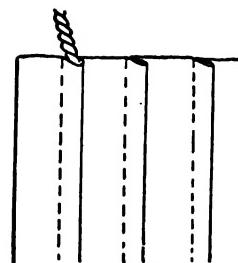
Corded shirring is effective, especially on velvets and collars. Various effects can be secured with cording. Make several rows of tucks on the right side of the material. They should be made by hand on velvet. The tuck must be sufficiently wide to take a cable cord at least one-eighth inch thick. Mark the rows so that they will be evenly spaced. The cable cord can be purchased at a notion counter. Wrap the end of the cord with thread, sew this end to a bodkin, and draw the bodkin and cord through the tuck, making it longer than the desired length of the finished portion. Cut off the cord and draw through the other cord sections. After all the cords are drawn through the tucks, draw them all up to the pattern shape. They should all be shaped simultaneously so as to pull the shirring crosswise.

### Shirring

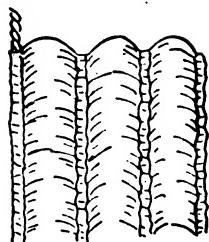


### Machine fluting and pleating

### Corded shirring



## TRIMMINGS

**Puffed shirring****Lace trimmings**

Shirring can be puffed for velvet coat collars or for pillows and various trimmings.

Draw up the cords as previously explained in corded shirring, then baste the outer edge of the shirring to a cloth pattern of the collar. Place a small roll of cotton sheet wadding under the puff and sew the second row of cord to place holding up the puff. Continue to the full size of the collar or section to be covered.

**Narrow lace**

Shaped yoke effects can be purchased to be used as insets on dresses. The outer edge is stitched to the garment and the material is trimmed away underneath. Many smart lace effects are offered for lingerie. Shaped sections of lace can also be purchased for inset trimmings.

Narrow lace may be used for many purposes. The heavy thread that runs through the top edge can be drawn up as a gathering thread. The lace is then either stitched on from the right side with the lace on the wrong side or felled on by hand.

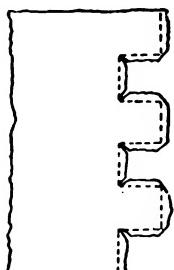
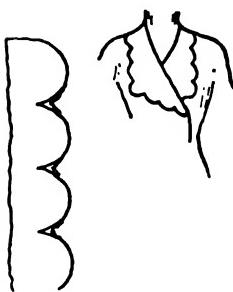
**Scallops**

Scallops make an excellent trimming on the edges of revers, collars, cuffs, and often on hems. The facing is made like the outer section, cutting it on the same thread of the materials.

Cut a paper pattern of the collar or hem. Fold the edge into an evenly spaced division of the length, judging the size of the scallop desired. Select a dish or small object a trifle larger than the space, as the scallops do not run to a sharp point at the joining. Mark the scallop on the folded paper and cut it out. The edge will then be marked for the full length of the material. Pin the paper to the goods and pencil-mark around the edge of the scallops. The corners should be a semicircle. The points at the joining can be marked off with a pencil mark, which reduces their depth. (See illustration.)

Baste the facing to the collar. Machine-stitch the shaped scallops to the facing, using the machine needle as a pivot when the point is reached. (See section on machine-stitching.) Trim the seam very close, clip the point and turn, baste the edges closely, and press.

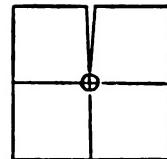
Battlement trimming is made in squares instead of scallops and also makes a trimming edge for plain collars. Even up the space as for scallops. Mark off the squares, spacing the lines evenly. Stitch to the shaped facing in



perfect points, trim the seams, clip the corners, turn, and press.

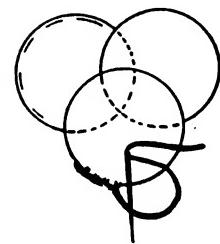
Flares

Flared collars, cuffs, revers or skirt tiers can be added to the dress by cutting squares of material, folding double into a smaller square, slashing open one side, cutting a small circle from the point, one-quarter of the length to be covered with the flare. Open the piece and a rippled flare with four points will appear. The corners may be cut off to form a circle.



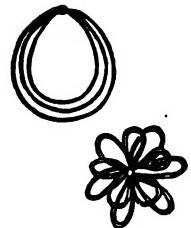
Appliquéd

Appliquéd makes an effective trimming on children's cloth aprons, pillows, and many novelties. These appliqués can be traced from animal pictures or can be made of overlapped circles. The appliquéd is cut from bright-colored materials. The raw edge is usually turned under and sewed to the garment with small stitches and then is blanket-stitched around the edge with embroidery floss.



Tube trimming

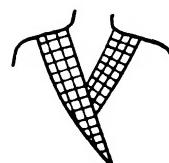
Corded tubes, made like tailored loops, of the material or of a contrasting color, make an effective trimming for ties, braided belts, a necklace caught in the back with a clasp or frog or lapped in the front with a tassel. Smaller strands can be looped and grouped together to form a shoulder or neck cluster for an ornament. The material is made as directed for making loops in the lesson on tailored loops.



Floss stitching

Fancy stitching can be made with floss or knitting silk. It can be made in straight rows or can be stitched into square or diamond shapes. All lines should be marked on the wrong side of the goods for the stitching, or a true gauge is used.

Wind the bobbin of the sewing machine with heavy floss. Loosen the upper tension only and stitch from the wrong side. The effect will be similar to embroidery. The upper thread can be of a different color or black to make even a more effective trimming. Bands stitched in squares for a Tuxedo fold on a coat of silk with cuffs and pockets to match is most effective. A collar or yoke stitched with



## TRIMMINGS

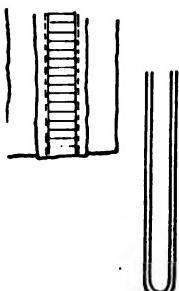
several rows of floss also is effective. Belt tabs and trimming insets can also be made. It is advisable to practice on a sample before stitching the garment.

**Hemstitched strips**

Attractive organdy trimming can be made by hemstitching two or more colors together, using narrow strips of equal width and stitching them into a seam. The hemstitching is then split into a piquot edge and will not be visible. Collars, cuffs, or sash ends can be made in this manner.

**Home hemstitching**

Hemstitching can be made at home. Folded tissue paper can be placed between the material of the seams. Both tensions should be loose. The paper is removed after the seam is stitched. The sides are then pressed back and stitched at the edge.

**Homemade appliance**

A hemstitching appliance can be made at home by a handy man. (See illustration.) Use an eighth of an inch of heavy wire, bending the ends into a double bar, very close (one-eighth inch) together. It should be six to eight inches long.

This bar is placed between the two edges of material on the seam when stitching and the needle travels between the two sides of the bar. The curved end is out in front and the open end of the bar is under the presser foot so that it can be drawn through the material as the seam progresses. Better results will be secured if the two edges are first stitched together plain, then the bar is used as close as possible to the first stitching. This makes it possible to space the hemstitching more evenly.

After the seam is finished, pull out the outer stitching, trim off the outer seam, press back the sides, and flat-stitch the edges. Various effects can be secured by practice.

Tailored pockets in dresses make an effective trimming. (See section on pockets.) Pockets and bound buttonholes will be all that is required to take the dress out of the homemade class.

**Tailored pockets**

Velvet or velveteen is often used for collars and cuffs on tailored dresses, often in a contrasting material. It is advisable to understand the handling of velvet before using it for trimming. (See lesson on materials.)

**Velvet**

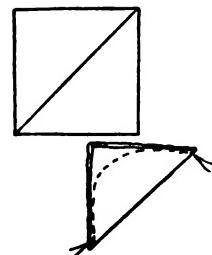
Fur is used for trimming in various ways, often in banding.

**Fur**

Fur is used in small quantities on a dress. A touch of fur is all that is required for smartness.

## Flowers

Flowers can be made of material to be used as an effective trimming. They can be made of organdy or silk, of ribbon or of various crocheted effects. The material folds and rolls beautifully on the bias. The easiest and most effective quick flower is made from a square of silk, folded cornerwise, gathered across the corner and drawn up into a cup shape. Several of these petals are made and overlapped into a bud.



## QUESTIONS

1. What safe rule may be followed in selecting trimming?
2. Name several ways in which scraps of dress fabrics may be used?
3. Who may be approached for trimming advice?
4. How can various fabrics be used as trimmings?
5. How should brilliant colors be chosen for trimmings?
6. How may strips of fabric be used in trimming?
7. How is fringing made? How is it used?
8. How is corded piping made?
9. How may yarn be used?
10. How may floss be used?
11. When is flat-stitching used?
12. How is pleated tubing made and used?
13. How may covered cord be used?
14. How is dart trimming made?
15. What are cartridge pleats? how are they attached?
16. What color should be selected for the trimming?
17. What amount of bright color should be used?
18. Where are the bright colors used?
19. How is faggoting used?
20. What are the different kinds of faggotting?
21. How are buttons used?
22. Where are bound buttonholes used for trimming?
23. When and where are ties used?
24. How are ties cut, pieced, and finished?
25. How are scarfs used?
26. How is a tie tied?
27. Which part is brought to the top?
28. Which part makes the first loop?
29. How is a tailored bow made?
30. How is pleating used?
31. How can sunburst pleating be made at home?
32. What are godets? When and where are they used?
33. Of what are jabots made?

34. How can varied fullness be used in collars and cuffs?
35. How is sheering made and used?
36. How is puffed sheering made?
37. How is lace trimming used?
38. How is narrow lace gathered?
39. How are scallops marked and finished?
40. How is appliquéd made and used?
41. How can tube trimming be used?
42. How can flower trimming be used?
43. How can hemstitching be used for a trimming?
44. How can a hemstitching appliance be made?
45. How can silk flowers be made?

**PART VII**

**Individual Fitting**



## CHAPTER 26

### Fitting

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#### PREFACE TO FITTING

Perfect dress fitting is often difficult to accomplish merely with pattern adjustment and without additional fitting *after* the dress is assembled. Little help has been offered the home sewer in solving her fitting problems.

The methods and statements given in this section are not theoretical but are based on facts gleaned from actual practice and from the careful analysis of tens of thousands of measurements for individually drafted patterns, which were especially created to fit the posture of the individual as well as individual lengths and circumferences. The variance in proportions was startling. Disproportionate figures are not all large figures. The differences in measurements of women of 36 bust alone was astounding. Careful analysis revealed a great variation in measurements of the upper arm. These measurements varied from 11 to 15 inches on women who required a 36 size pattern, with even greater variation on larger sizes.

Arm variation affects the armhole—its back as well as its front, and thus alters the whole line of the pattern above the armhole. Armhole and sleeves, back and front of the pattern, must be fitted to secure comfort.

It would seem that all this difficulty might discourage home sewers, but the reverse is true. After securing just one dress that fits, a woman becomes fitting-conscious. She is so thrilled with the comfort and smartness of the dress she made and fitted that she craves not only to make all of her own dresses but also to experience the additional thrill of creating something with her own hands.

Variance of proportions

## FITTING

The secret of perfect fitting lies in the *back* of the waist *above* the armhole; in the scye depth (taken from the word *armscye*). A woman sewing alone, therefore, cannot fit her own back unless she has a fitting guide in the form of one plain pattern that fits. To this comfortable master pattern, she can then adjust all future patterns, and can fit all her dresses perfectly before they are even cut out. Imagine the thrill of making a perfectly fitted dress without even trying it on. This is not only possible but it is being done by thousands of happy home sewers.

## FITTING ANALYZED

### **Fitting is a problem**

Fitting is a problem that confronts the tailor, the dressmaker, the ready-to-wear department, and the home sewer. The various curves of a woman's figure complicate the problem and make the closely fitting garment even more difficult to adjust to the individual figure than is the garment with straight lines.

### **Older women are difficult to fit**

Commercial patterns are made according to a basis of standard measurements of youthful figures. As the variation from standard measurements often does not develop until later years, older women are often difficult to fit. Women of the stouter type accumulate an excess of flesh disproportionately. Some develop muscular or fleshy arms and remain small through the bust, while others of the same bust size may have very small arms and wide shoulders. Some develop large busts and retain the narrow shoulders, while others remain small in the bust but expand in the hips. These represent some of the variations from the standard measurements that make fitting especially difficult for the stout woman.

### **Figures differ**

The standard figure is a fiction reached through striking an average after many measurements, and the individual who conforms to these measurements is fortunate. In actual life, the individual inherits a certain bony structure which determines the breadth of her shoulders and the length of her arms and body. An unusual bony structure may require standard pattern alterations, but these alterations may not cover unusual proportions developed through an accumulation of extra flesh through the lower shoulders, arms, bust, or hips.

Fitting is *all* important; style, fabric, color, and workmanship, all contribute to the smartness of the garment; but no garment is smart that does not fit the individual who wears it. The experienced sewer often becomes so discouraged with attempting to solve her own fitting problems that though she may desire to do her own sewing, she resorts—through desperation—to the ready-to-wear departments where fitters are employed to solve her problems.

Fitting is important

Fitting is often a snare and a delusion. The delusion arises when the dress is tried on, for the dress may settle down around the shoulders and neck and appear to fit on the shoulders but may bulge and draw elsewhere. The snare develops in attempting to eliminate the bulges and drawings and to fit the dress correctly.

Fitting a snare and a delusion

The law of gravity has been responsible for the dress resting smoothly on the shoulders, but do not assume that a dress fits merely because it rests smoothly around the neck. Neck fitting is of minor consideration compared to fitting of the shoulders, back, armholes, front, hips, and sleeves.

Fitting deceptive

Dresses are not all designed to fit with the same degree of looseness. Those designed to fit loosely should not be fitted too closely or the designed effect will be sacrificed. If, however, the dress does not produce the desired effect, it may be changed.

Looseness differs

The type of fitting will be evident in the pattern illustration. If the dress has been designed on loose lines around the sleeves and armholes, there will be folds in evidence on the illustration. If smooth lines have been designed, the illustration will have no folds. If the picture indicates smooth lines, the dress should be equally as smooth; and if it indicates looseness, the dress should be equally as loose.

Illustrations explain type

Dresses of various types are also designed to fit with a varying degree of looseness. House dresses are made on looser lines than are afternoon frocks, and evening gowns are fitted more closely than are all other dresses. Dresses with close-fitted sleeve lines cannot be fitted as snugly as sleeveless dresses, and heavy crepes and woolens can be fitted much more closely than sheer fabrics.

Some dresses fit tighter

The woman of normal proportions can fit her dresses closely, but the disproportionate woman must be cautious. The figure with the hollow chest needs more fullness through the bust and chest than the normal figure of the

Fitting varies

same bust size. The woman with large hips should try to emphasize the bust in order to minimize the hips. The woman with a prominent abdomen should fit the hips more loosely than the normal figure in order to minimize the prominence of the abdomen. The fleshy woman often makes the mistake of wearing dresses that are fitted too closely and so presents an inflated appearance. The heavy bust lifts in the corseted figure when seated; and if the dress or coat is fitted closely when standing, it may be too tight when seated. Therefore, the stout woman should test the fitting of her dress in a sitting position.

**Comfort, correct lines**

It is often difficult to judge the correct fitting of a dress by the appearance only. The dress may *appear* to be perfectly fitted as to the correct placement of lines and the correct thread of materials and yet be most uncomfortable.

**No strain or bulge**

A dress does not fit perfectly unless it falls into correct lines without *constant adjustment* and is perfectly comfortable when the wearer is in motion. The wearer should be unconscious of any strain or bulge in the dress, and it should not burst out in the seams under ordinary strain.

**Smoothness**

The dress should fit smooth down the back and down the front, and in a dress with a set-in sleeve, it should fit smooth around the arm. A fitted dress should have no pouches and excess material at the waistline or through the shoulders and sleeves. It should fit sufficiently loose that the wearer can move without the movement causing a strained appearance in the dress, and so that she can remove it without splitting the material or bursting the seams.

**No diagonal wrinkles**

There should be no diagonal wrinkles or crosswise pouches in any part of the dress.

The sleeves should be fitted to assure freedom of motion, and the hips should fit closely but should not present a strained appearance.

**Lines must be changed**

The lines of the figure cannot be changed to conform to the lines of the pattern, therefore, the lines of the pattern must be changed to conform to the figure. This change in the pattern often makes it necessary to determine the correct placement of a new shoulder line, neckline, or armhole placement.

If the figure is very short or very tall, the inner lines, such as the yoke lines of the design, must necessarily be lifted or lowered to retain the style lines of the pattern and to make the dress becoming to the individual type of figure.

General rules will be given for fitting a plain dress with a set-in sleeve, but the rules must be adapted to the material, the type of dress, and the individual who is to wear the garment.

**Set-in sleeves**

Although regular ready-made shoulder lines rest on top of the shoulder, custom-made garments are made with the shoulder lines one-fourth inch toward the back at the neck and one-half inch back of the top of the shoulder at the armhole. It may be advisable to change this rule to improve the lines of the figure.

**Change shoulders**

Round shoulders have a tendency to appear straighter if the shoulder line is moved further back, and the overerect figure assumes a more normal posture if the shoulder line is placed further to the front. This change will be made *after* the shoulder lines have been altered to fit these types of figures.

Necklines vary with the prevailing styles, but the back of the neck of tailored dresses, or dresses with collars, should rest well up to the bone at the back of the neck or on a line with a strand of beads.

**Necklines vary**

Necklines that are cut low in the back often give an uncomfortable feeling, as though the dress were sliding off the shoulders. In this case, the neckline should be raised. A neckline that bulges in the back is too high and the back and shoulders will need to be raised.

When making a neckline that is pointed in front, it is advisable to check the depth of the point, as each woman has a becoming depth of the neck. Cut the neck a trifle too high and trim it out on the wearer if necessary.

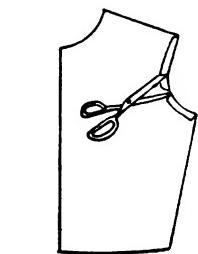
Placement of the armhole also depends upon the design of the dress. The pattern illustration will indicate extra folds down the side of the arm or body if the armhole is low or loose. The rules as given determine the placement of the armhole of a set-in sleeve. Variations in sleeve designs will vary the rule.

**Sleeves vary**

The actual armhole measurement varies with the position of the arm. It will measure from one to two inches smaller with the arm raised than with the arm lowered. French sleeves are made to fit the extended arm, which gives a very small armhole and quite a straight sleeve cap. The commercial sleeve pattern is made for the lowered arm which gives a large armhole. This is necessary for average fitting of a wide variation in figures, as some figures have a

**Armhole size**

## FITTING

**Correct armhole placement****Armhole looseness****Various sleeves****Different backs**

low back armhole and some have a low front armhole. Making them both low produces a loose armhole but does not give a perfect fitting. Raising the armpit to fit the individual gives a more comfortable fitting.

Correct placement of the individual armhole for a set-in sleeve will rest on the line of a string tied around the arm to the shoulder. Mark the line of the string.

Have the customer clasp the hands in front when marking the back and clasp the hands in the back when marking the front. The underarm should rest within one-half inch of the pit of the arm when lowered.

When the shoulders, chest, and cross-back are made wider or narrower, it will be necessary to change the line of the armhole. The armhole will also be changed when the size of the sleeve is changed. This change is frequent, as there is a great variation in the size of arms. Mark the new armhole placement, but do not cut out the armhole until the dress is removed. Clip into the curves, placing the point of the scissors at the end of the point to be clipped; fold the edge of the seam back over the point of the scissors, and cut the goods with the scissors in this position.

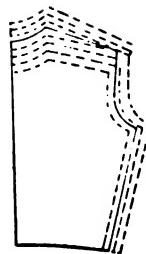
If the armhole of a fitted sleeve seems too tight, *never* cut the sleeve *under* the arm but rather clip in the curve in *front* of the arm. One-quarter inch will relieve the strain. Do not hollow out an armhole to produce comfort. This often produces tragic results.

Fashion changes the placement of the armhole. The drop shoulder places the armhole below the shoulder line and the short shoulder places the armhole higher. The various styles of epaulet shoulders designed with the sleeve extending to the neck and having a fitted underarm—the raglan sleeve with the *loose* underarm and the sleeve extending to the neck, the dolman sleeve very loose under the arm, and the kimono sleeve cut in one with the body of the dress—all must be considered in fitting, and any changes in fitting will be made as directed later in these pages.

Special stress is placed on the importance of fitting the upper part of the back of the waist, as there are many variations of the fitting of this portion of the dress, each variation in figure requiring a change in the pattern. The wide shoulders and the narrow shoulders; the narrow upper back and the wide lower back; the sloping shoulders and the erect

shoulders; the erect shoulders and the stooped shoulders; the fat shoulders; each are to be fitted to a figure with large arms or small arms, which also varies the armholes on each. Each type combined with the others makes a vast assortment of different backs that will require pattern alterations.

Some patterns make provision for moderate letting out on the side and shoulder seams. When using these patterns, be sure to note this extra allowance.



## CHAPTER 27

### Standard Measurement Comparisons

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#### **Patterns are made from standard measurements**

The standard basis of measurements is averaged from the measurements of a large number of women who all measure the same bust size. The measurements of the lengths of the body and arms, the widths of the cross-backs, shoulder slopes, and sizes of the arms may vary for individual figures, but an average size must be secured to produce a commercial pattern at a small price. Some manufacturers make patterns to fit figures of several different types—short women, women with large hips, women with the juvenile type of figure, and so on. By studying your figure and making your selection from patterns designed for your type, you will reduce the necessary adjustment or perhaps eliminate it entirely.

#### **Patterns differ**

Even though the pattern manufacturers may agree on a certain proportion as to the comparative bust and hip size, each uses a different basic pattern for designing. Hence, each pattern manufacturer fits a different type of figure. One make of pattern may fit a different type of woman better than another make of pattern, not because the pattern is made on better fitting lines, but because the pattern fits her type of figure. On the other hand, the pattern that fits her may not fit her friend of the same bust size who is easily fitted in another make of pattern. It is not the pattern that is wrong, it is the figure that does not conform to the lines of the pattern. As it is impossible to alter the lines of the figure, the pattern must be altered to conform to the lines of the figure. The lines of the pattern *must* be altered if the dress does not fit.

#### **Do not hesitate to alter the pattern**

Correctly fitted dresses, which do not bulge and draw, cover the peculiarities of the figure far better than dresses made with no alterations.

Professional fitters in ready-to-wear departments do not hesitate to alter the lines of the *dress*, if it will improve the dress or if it will improve the effect of the dress on the customer. In fact, the garment would often not be sold unless such important alterations were made.

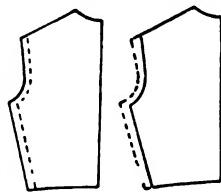
### Fitters alter dresses

Pattern alterations are equally essential but must be made wisely and with the understanding of the subject of fitting. The alterations that will herein be described will not all be used on *one* pattern, nor will they all be used for *one* figure. There may possibly be in one figure only one or two variations from the standard pattern. The full category of fitting problems will be explained in these pages so that the reader can determine wherein the individual figure varies from the standard measurements and how to correct the pattern.

### Wise altering

Individual measurements may vary in the width of the shoulders; the figure with narrow shoulders will find the pattern so wide that the shoulder seam will be too long, the back too wide, and the front possibly too narrow. Altering these lines will change the armhole, but it is necessary for good fitting.

### Narrow shoulders



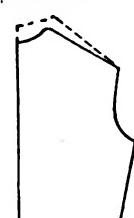
Individuals with wide shoulders will find that the pattern is too narrow through the shoulders, the cross-back is too narrow, and the shoulder seams are too short. The chest may also be too narrow and the front dart too wide.



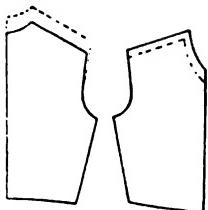
Figures with square shoulders have the arms set high on the body, which shortens the pattern above the armholes. The commercial pattern will be cut too low at the underarm for such a figure, and therefore must be lifted the full width of the shoulder seam across the back.

### Sloping shoulders

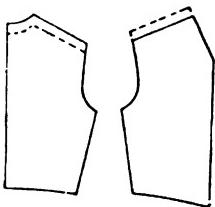
Sloping shoulders also present difficulties in fitting and will require alterations in the pattern. Sloping shoulders place the arms so low on the body that the shoulder seam will have to be changed. This change often necessitates lengthening the back at the neck and then sloping the shoulder seam from this additional allowance made at the neck and shoulder seam down to the correct line at the armhole. It is often necessary to let out the seam on the full length of the shoulder in the back, letting out more material at the *neck* of the shoulder seam than at the *arm-hole*. This alteration will lengthen the back and slope the shoulder seam as required.



## STANDARD MEASUREMENT COMPARISONS

**Erect posture**

The woman with very erect posture may find that the pattern is too long in the back and too short in front from the waistline to the shoulders. Pattern alterations to fit this type of figure would not only lengthen the front section but would also change the placement of the shoulder seam, as the pattern would be shortened in the back at the shoulders.

**Stooped shoulders**

The individual with stooped or rounded shoulders must also alter the lines of the pattern—often in a marked degree, depending upon the posture. The back of the figure will be quite curved, and it will be necessary to lengthen the pattern above the armhole after straightening the thread of material across the back, below the armpits. The pattern must also be altered in front for the stooped figure, as it will usually be too long from the armpits to the shoulders. This change will be made by *lifting* the shoulder seam at the neck.

**Arms vary**

Variation in arm measurements compared to the standard sizes in sleeves presents a need to consider sleeve pattern alterations. Arms vary in size in as great a proportion as do the hips for different figures of the same bust size. The size of the arm will vary from one-half to three inches larger or smaller than the arm that is supposed to be fitted with the sleeve enclosed with the pattern. The small woman who may have an unusually large arm, or the large woman who may have a very small arm, must be fitted not only through sleeve alterations but with armhole alterations also.

**Arms of one size vary**

Fitting the upper arm does not solve all of the fitting problems in sleeves, as arms of one size vary greatly in proportion. A pattern that fits the upper arm will not necessarily fit the lower arm, and this, in addition to the variation in arm lengths, presents quite a problem in sleeve fitting.

**Underarm seams meet**

Modern sleeves are set into the armhole with the under-arm seam of the sleeve meeting the underarm seam of the dress. Two-piece coat sleeves and intricately cut patterns may not conform to this rule, but when a pattern is used, the notches should be followed for correct placement.

**Fullness at the elbow**

The fullness that is placed at the back of the arm at the elbow in closely fitted sleeves is necessary for comfort when the arm is bent and also keeps the sleeve from twisting. The arm that is quite large at the lower arm in comparison to the size of the upper arm will need a greater fullness in

the elbow of the sleeve; but the arm that is quite large in the upper arm and very small in the lower arm will require very little elbow fullness.

Skirts that are attached to waists in the dress should be fitted in one unit with the waist. There should be no change in fitting at the waistline unless for a woman with a large abdomen. Therefore, the waist and skirt should be joined together before fitting. There will be little change in the skirt other than in the hips. The dress will be anchored at the waist and the greater part of the fitting will be *above the waist line*.

The fitting rules given will apply to a plain dress with the natural waistline fitted. The skirt will be closely fitted at the hips and the dress will have a set-in sleeve, fitted to the wrist. The fitting of all other styles will be based on the fitting of a plain dress.

The rules for fitting could be more clearly demonstrated if the first dress were made of checked gingham. The cross-wise and lengthwise threads are very prominent in this material and will be easily followed and straightened as directed. The dress can be used as a guide for future fitting, after all alterations that were made are carefully marked.

**Skirt fitting closely related to waist fitting**

**Rules for a plain dress**

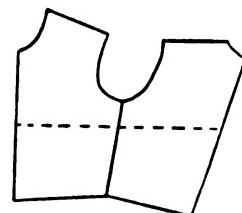
**Make first dress of checked gingham**

## SIZE OF PATTERN TO SELECT

Patterns are usually selected according to the bust size, as skirt alterations are easy to make. The majority of skirts can be altered easily on the side seams by making an extra seam allowance or by taking in the seam. This procedure will not affect the style of the dress. But if the underarm seams of the waist are taken up or let out, the armhole will also be altered in the same degree and complications may develop that are difficult for the home sewer to solve. This makes it advisable to select the correct bust size and then to alter the hips.

Skirt patterns with the side seams so designed that the seams of the skirt do not meet the underarm seams of the waist, often produce a complication in fitting, if the hip pattern is found to be too large. A complicated skirt design should therefore be purchased according to the hip size and should then be altered at the waist.

**Selecting the bust size**

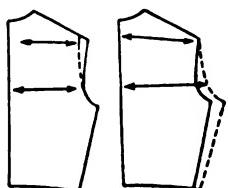


**Very large hips  
and small bust**

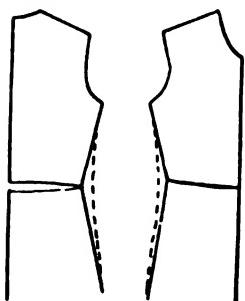
The woman with unusually large hips in proportion to the bust size will encounter less difficulty in general if she selects a pattern between the bust and hip size; that is a pattern a trifle larger than the bust and a little smaller than the hips. The alterations that will then be made will not radically change the lines of the pattern. Only on the side seams will these lines be changed, and these will be easily fitted. The hips will be made larger and the bust smaller.

**Figures with larger  
bust than hips**

If the figure is larger in the bust than in the hips in relation to the pattern, it is always advisable to select a pattern the size of the bust and take in the hips. The hiplines are easily altered and the inner waistlines are retained.

**Two cross-backs**

There are two cross-backs, and they both vary greatly from the standard pattern. One is straight across the shoulders at the top of the arm, and the other is four inches lower. The measurement of the lower one will sometimes be as much as three inches wider than that of the upper one. Tucks can be taken in the back of the neck to fit the curve or the armhole can be sloped.

**FITTING THE LINES OF THE BODY****Fitting curves****Spreading the  
pattern cannot fit  
curves**

The correct method of fitting conforms to the curves of the woman's figure, often being made at the natural waist. The rules can be modified to conform to the changes in fashion or to individual taste as to looseness or tightness of the garment, but these rules will be governed by the amount of alteration made at the underarm seams, for these seams control the looseness or tightness of the dress.

Definite rules will be given for the elimination of any pouches, puckers, or drawings in a dress and should be followed as given. Following these rules first of all strengthens the thread of material on a garment, thus making it comfortable whether the dress is loose or tight fitting.

The conventional method of fitting the figure by splitting and spreading the pattern will be used only to lengthen certain sections but cannot be employed for fitting the curves of the figure or for fitting posture. This method of pattern alteration may accomplish the purpose of "not altering the lines of the pattern," but it does not produce the result desired: "fitting the figure" and making the dress comfortable.

When the pattern is split lengthwise and spread crosswise to enlarge any one of its crosswise measurements, the spreading not only enlarges the measurement desired but also enlarges every other crosswise measurement on that pattern section.

For example: If the back of the waist is split and spread from the waistline to the shoulder seam to enlarge the cross-back, the cross-back is not only enlarged but the bust and waist measurements are also enlarged to a much greater degree.

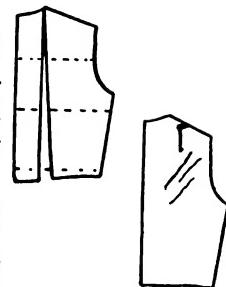
If the waist is not cut in one with the skirt, the waistline of the bodice will be enlarged to such an extent that it will be much too large to match the notches of the waistline of the skirt.

Small darts cannot be satisfactorily taken in the shoulder seams to shorten them, as the pattern will not lie flat and the cross-back will be narrowed.

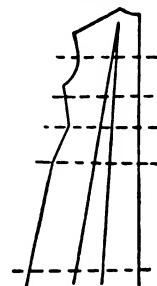
The same complication will be found even to a greater degree when a full-length pattern is split and spread from the hemline to the shoulders to enlarge the hips. This enlargement will not only enlarge the hips but will also enlarge all other crosswise measurements, including the upper and lower cross-back, bustline, waistline, and the lower edge of the skirt.

It is not necessary to enlarge the whole pattern to be able to enlarge one measurement. The correct alteration will produce much better results.

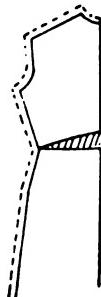
Patterns should be altered only on the measurements that require changing. All alterations except those in length should be made on the side and shoulder seams. The length of a pattern should be tested and adjustment made, if necessary, before the fabric is cut. If your pattern does not provide sufficient width of seam for letting out the garment, it will be wise to make an additional seam allowance on the sides, armholes, shoulders and neck, and then mark the sewing line by pressing the seams over the pattern as previously described. This will give a perfect line to follow in letting out or taking in from the original basting.



**Enlarging all measurements**



**Fitting at the side seams**



## INDIVIDUAL MEASUREMENTS

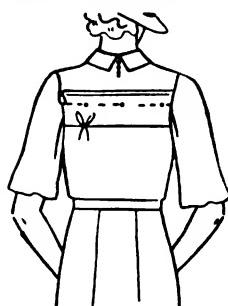
<b>Measurement chart</b>	1.....	Full length in center back
	2.....	Depth of armhole
	3.....	Waist length in center back
	4.....	Underarm depth
	5.....	Waist front from back of neck
	6.....	Upper cross-back
	7.....	Lower cross-back
	8.....	Bust
	9.....	Waist
	10.....	Hips
	11.....	Thigh (if large)
	12.....	Sleeve length
	13.....	Upper arm
	14.....	Lower arm

**Dressmaker's chart**

Dressmakers should be supplied with measurement charts containing the following information for each customer:

Date ..... Phone .....  
 Name .....  
 Address .....  
 Pattern number and make .....  
 Date of appointments made .....

## HOW TO TAKE MEASUREMENTS

**Removal of dress**

**Chest tape**

It is advisable for the individual being measured to remove the dress when measurements are being taken. If a corset is worn, her figure should be corseted. She should stand in a normal, not a tense, posture. In preparing the individual for measurement, let her stand in front of a mirror; a mirror will show crooked lines quicker than the eye can detect them. Stand back of the person who is being measured. Prepare two long heavy cords or tapes. Have a good tapeline and pencil ready with a copy of the measurement chart from this book.

The customer holds her arms straight out. From the back, reach under her arms and place one tape high across the chest and under the arms. With the tape held close to the armpits at the back, have the customer drop her arms, then tie this tape at one side, not in the center back. Tie it *tight*. This tight tape is not a measurement.

Turn the customer to one side, look in the mirror and see if the tape is *straight* from one arm to the other. If tied loosely, it will drop too low. If drawn upward when tying, it will be too high. The mirror checks its accuracy.

This tape is placed merely to measure the depth of the armholes and is the most important measurement on the whole garment. The variation of one inch will make an uncomfortable garment.



**Marking the neck bone**

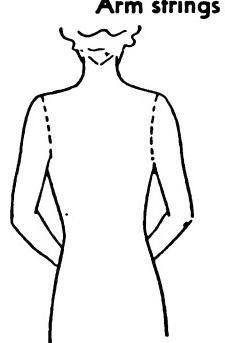
Drop a strand of beads or a heavy weighted cord around the neck. Place a pencil-marked cross just *below* the strand and at the center of the neck. Several measurements are taken from this mark.

Tie a tape around the waist, placing it where the waistline will be worn, high or low as desired.

Place a small string or elastic around the arm, and as it is held at the shoulder bone, pencil-mark a line on the body following this string. Mark to the shoulder and down the back to the underarm. The chest also can be marked and measured if desired. The customer is now ready to be measured.

1. Measure the "full length of the back," starting at the penciled cross-mark on the neck. Hold the tape in at the waistline and measure the length to the floor, then subtract the number of inches from the floor that the skirt will be worn.

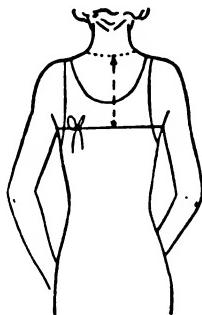
**Waist tape**



**Arm strings**



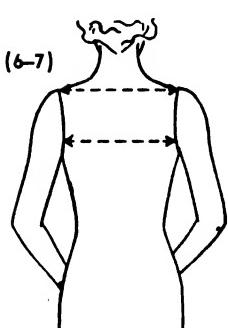
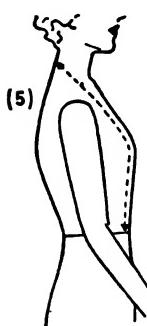
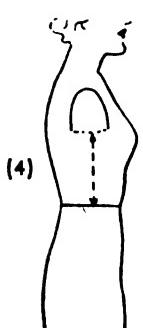
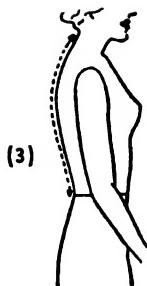
(1)



(2)

2. To measure the "depth of armhole" measure from the neck mark down to the chest tape. Take this measurement twice to check its accuracy. This measurement is seldom less than 7 inches on small sizes and it may be  $8\frac{1}{2}$  to 9

## STANDARD MEASUREMENT COMPARISONS



inches or more on larger women. Very small women may measure less than 7 inches. The average length is 8 to 8½ inches.

3. For the "waist length in the center back," again measure from the mark on the neck to the waistline tape. Do not stretch the tape. The fabric will not be stretched in the dress when the customer wears it. Note the straightness of the waistline tape in the mirror as viewed from the side. Usually a waistline rests where the hands would rest on the hips at the side seam.

4. The "underarm depth" is next measured. Have the customer raise her arms. Measure from the chest tape to the waist tape.

If the customer has one shoulder lower than the other, the armhole will also be lower on the low side. Check both underarm seams and record both if there is a difference. (The front shoulder seam on the low side must then be lifted in the garment.)

5. To measure the "waist front" the mark on the back of the neck is again used. Place the tape on this mark, touching the perpendicular mark on the cross at the center and draw the tape around next to the neck, down over the bust, and to the waistline under the bust.

6. The "upper cross-back" will now be measured, using the penciled lines around the arm. The customer holds her elbows in front while these measurements are taken. Measure at the top of the shoulder straight across the back to the other shoulder, beginning and ending the measurements between the two armhole marks.

7. The individual being measured crosses her arms, holding opposite elbows while the back is being measured. The shoulder bones will thus become more prominent for placing the measurement. Measure from shoulder bone to the opposite shoulder bone, at the crown on the shoulder. The lower back may be wider. Measure at four inches below the first measurement—possibly five inches on large figures. The measurement is taken just before the armhole disappears under the arm.

8. The bust measurement is taken from the back. Here is a hint for taking bust measurements: Take the tape in the hand at the twelve-inch mark. Reach under the customer's arms from the back (watch the mirror). Place the tape over the farthest bust at the fullest part. Catch this tape with the other hand. Place the tape on both busts and slowly and carefully bring the tape under the arms about two inches below the armpit. Hold it at the back of the arms while the customer lowers her arms, then slowly and carefully bring the figure one (1) on the tape to meet the other tape edge. Be sure you read the correct side of a reverse-numbered tape. Measurement is taken easy but not so loose that the tape would drop off.

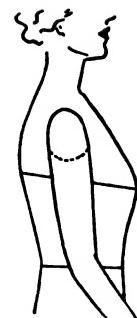
This measurement may be startling, but subtract two inches from it for your pattern size. Patterns are made for brassière measurements with from four to six inches added. Measure an old pattern or dress to be convinced.

9. Measure the waist as a belt would be worn. If taken tight, add one inch to relieve a strain on the fabric on the waist seam.

10. "Hips" are measured at seven inches below the waistline at the side seam. Watch the tape in the mirror to place it straight. Do not draw the tape tight in the center front—no tighter than a line dropped straight down from the abdomen.

11. Thighs cannot be measured. Drop the hands along the thighs if they are firm and large, then add two inches to the measured hip size and mark for thigh measurement.

12. For sleeve length, flex the arm. Measure from the top of the shoulder at the pencil mark, down over the elbow, and to the wrist bone as it drops loosely from the arm. The tape reaches the crease in the wrist.



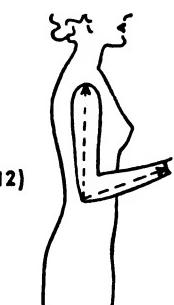
(8)



(9-10)

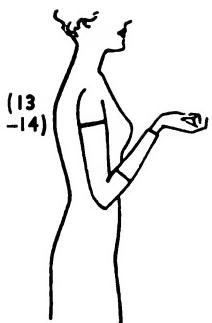


(11)



(12)

## STANDARD MEASUREMENT COMPARISONS



13. To measure the upper arm, flex the arm and make a fist. Place the tape under the arm. Drop the arm to the side, place the hand on the arm, palm up, and ease the tape over the arm and four fingers. Keep the tape straight in the mirror. This will give the minimum sleeve size for a fitted sleeve.

14. To measure the lower arm, again flex the arm and make a fist to bring up the muscle. Place the tape in the bend of the arm. Look at the tape at the back of the arm and measure the exact size over the fullest portion. Easy measurement.

15. The wrist can be measured if desired. Measure with one finger under the tape.

## CHAPTER 28

### Fitting Tissue Patterns to Measurements

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Use a tailor's colored chalk to mark all lines that have been altered on the pattern. All alterations on pattern or garment should be made on the side seams and not on the joining seams of the sections of the design. The garment will be joined and then fitted as though the garment and waist were cut in two sections in the front from neck, to waist, to hem, and in one section in the back.

It is necessary to pin all the sections of the front of the pattern together and all the sections of the back together before fitting. The waist remains separate from the skirt when the pattern is fitted.

The back is fitted first, pinning in any pleats, joining any yoke sections, or overlapping any double back sections.

The back pattern is now in one piece. Fold the back down at the underarm at the sewing line and not at the edge of the pattern, keeping the center back lines together. Measure the depth of the upper part of the back pattern from the neck to the folded edge.

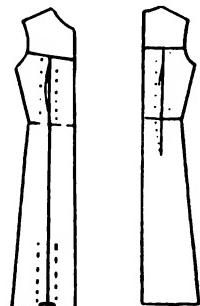
If the pattern is too long from neck to armpit, fold a tuck through the pattern across the back to shorten it to the desired length.

If the pattern is too short, split the pattern across the back and set in a piece of paper so as to make the pattern the necessary length.

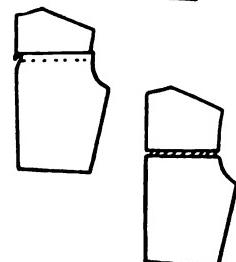
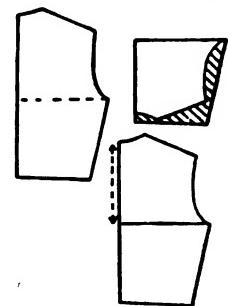
For example: If the individual measures seven and one-half inches and the pattern measures eight and one-half inches, then take up a half-inch tuck across the back of the pattern from center back to armhole. This will shorten the upper back one inch.

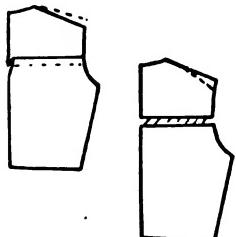
If the individual measures nine and one-half inches and the pattern measures eight and one-half inches, split the upper back pattern from center back to armpit and set in a one-inch strip to give it the extra length.

Tailor's chalk

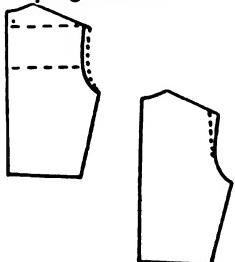


Fitting the  
armhole depth

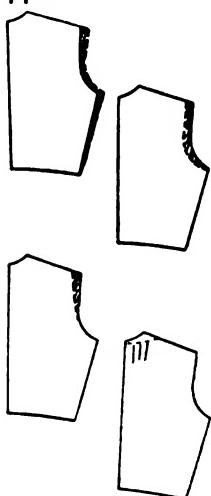


**Square shoulders**

For square shoulders, the top of the pattern usually requires shortening from the armpit to the neck. It can be shortened by taking up a fold or tuck in the pattern between the back and the armhole or by marking a new neck and shoulder. An extra inch should be allowed on the shoulder seam at the armhole to be able to make the shoulder seam straighter from neck to armhole, if necessary. (See rules for fitting.)

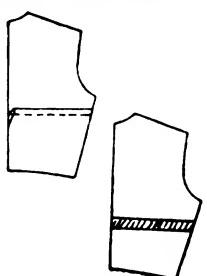
**Sloping shoulders**

Sloping shoulders, round shoulders, stooped shoulders, or fat shoulders often require lengthening this line. Slash the pattern from center back to armhole and set in a strip of paper the necessary width to make the back the correct depth. The shoulder seam may also be taken up at the top of the arm to give a more sloping line. The pattern must fit the back at the top of the pattern.

**Upper cross-back**

Measure across the shoulders on the half pattern from the center back to the armhole at the top. The tape will rest two inches below the neckline at the center back. The *lower* cross-back should also be measured and checked before any alterations are made on the *upper* cross-back. Place an extra paper for additional width or pencil-mark a narrower cross-back at the top.

Also, measure the lower cross-back at four inches below the point of the shoulder. Measure the pattern at the beginning of the curve of the underarm. Many full backs are quite wide at this point, and the pattern may require widening only at the lower cross-back. All alterations will be made at the armhole, pasting an extra paper for more width, or marking in on the pattern for a narrower back at this point. Although the lower cross-back is seldom more than one-half inch narrower than the upper cross-back, it may be much wider.

**Lower cross-back**

If the lower cross-back is wide and the upper is narrow, tucks can be taken at the back of the neck to take up the additional material. After the dress is tucked, it should measure the correct width, allowing the material to spread at the lower cross-back.

If the individual waist is short or long from the underarm to the waistline in the back, the pattern must be altered

to fit. The short-waisted person will require an even tuck across the pattern from the center back to the underarm. The long waist will require slashing and spreading the pattern at this line.

Pin all the sections of the front of the waist together, crushing in any gathers or drapes to match the notches given on the pattern. Pin on any yoke sections and overlap and pin any open front sections, matching and pinning down the center-front line of the pattern. The front of the waist is now in one piece. Pin the shoulder seam of the back to the shoulder seam of the front; place the pattern flat on a table with the underarm seam open.

Measure the pattern from the back of the neck down over the shoulder, over the bust, and straight to the waist, measuring three inches from the center front at the waistline.

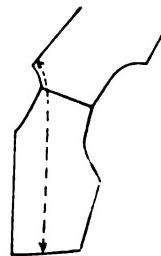
If the figure is overerect or has a full bust, the pattern may be short. This will also indicate that more dart is required at the underarm. Therefore, if the pattern is short, slash it from the center front to the underarm seam at the bustline and set in the necessary width. Some of this additional material or dart at the seam can be eliminated at the waistline with a curved edge at the waistline. (See illustration.) Or, the extra underarm length will be taken up in a dart.

The figure with the flat chest will require shortening the pattern above the bustline and also above the armhole. Take an even tuck across the pattern at the chestline from the armhole to the center front.

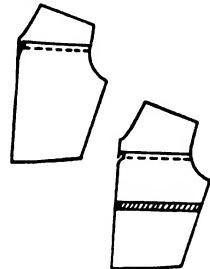
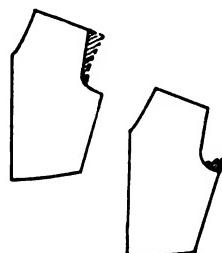
If the figure has a full bust, or is overerect, extra allowance should be made at the armhole. (See rules for fitting a plain dress.) The armhole can be blocked out and fitted on the figure, as all armholes vary greatly. A definite amount cannot be given. The waist will be fitted from the waistline upward.

If the pattern has a shoulder dart, the extra allowance in the armhole will be made at the shoulder seam, pasting on from one to three inches of paper for a wider dart, sloping to the curve of the front of the arm. If the dart on the pattern is at the underarm, or there is no dart in the pattern, then an extra dart will be necessary at the underarm seam and the allowance will be made at the lower edge of the armhole, allowing from a half inch to two inches, depending upon the size of the figure. This extra material, either on

Front length



Flat chest or full bust

Shoulder dart  
Underarm dart

## FITTING TISSUE PATTERNS TO MEASUREMENTS

the shoulder or at the underarm, will be drawn back into a dart to fit the figure. (See rules for fitting a plain dress.) The pattern will be matched on the original lines *below* the bustline.

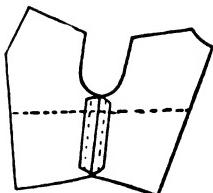
### **Underarm length**



The short-waisted figure may be so flat and short-waisted that the pattern will have to be shortened by taking up a tuck across the front from the center front to the underarm seam. The tuck will be made so as to keep the center-front line straight.

The long-waisted figure will require lengthening the pattern at the underarm by slashing and spreading the pattern at the same line; or extra allowance can be made at the waistline. This allowance must be made before cutting the dress.

### **Bust size**



Pin the back and front sections together at the underarm seam. Do not join the shoulders. Flatten the pattern on the table and measure it across the bustline at two inches below the armhole, sloping the tape slightly upward in the center back and downward in the center front.

Check this measurement with the individual measurements with the extra inches allowed, as directed in taking measurements. This extra allowance is required on all dresses with sleeves, even for close fitting. (Remember that the pattern represents but one-half of the measurement.)

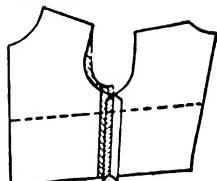
### **Bust too large**

If the bust size of the pattern or dress is too large, take up the underarm seam. If the pattern is too small, let out the underarm seam. All alterations are made on the outer seams of the garment.

*Caution.* Allowance must be made for freedom of motion when fitting the garment. Therefore never fit the pattern or dress to a tight bust measurement. Add an extra two to five inches to the body measurement before checking the pattern. Measure across the bustline of a well-fitted dress to secure the exact pattern measurement.

Changing the underarm seam also changes the armhole. Study the lesson on armhole fitting and darts.

### **Bust too small**



If the bust of the pattern is too small, spread the underarm seam until the pattern measures the correct amount and paste extra paper to the *front section*. Mark the new sewing line as it is pinned to the back side seam. Block out the armhole. (See *Fitting*.)

On very large figures it is often necessary to allow several inches to the front side seam section. This will alter the

armhole, as it will be too large. Block out the armhole as directed in the lesson on fitting the plain dress and fit a new armhole on the individual.

One well-fitted front section can be retained as a guide pattern to use in altering all other patterns.

Measure the width of the sleeve pattern at the underarms at the widest point. Check the size of the individual arm. A closely fitted sleeve for the small arm usually measures from two to three inches larger than the arm. The large arm requires at least one inch extra allowance for freedom of motion. If the sleeve is too large or too small, make one-third of the alteration down the center of the sleeve on a straight line to the elbow, and the other two-thirds on each side of the sleeve, taking one-third from each seam. This will retain the sleeve cap. The armhole has already been altered and the sleeve should fit the armhole.

Shorten or lengthen the sleeve as required for the individual. Make the alteration at the elbow. If the arm is short in front and full at the back, take up more at the front of the sleeve and less at the back. This type of arm requires a great amount of fullness at the elbow. (See *Sleeve problems*.)

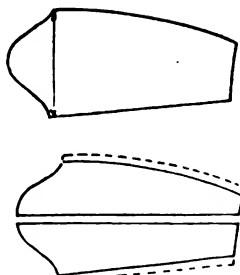
Pin all the front sections of the skirt together; shorten or lengthen each section to the required measurement as you did when altering the sleeve. Keep all tucks or slashes straight across the pattern from the front edge.

Join all the back portions of the pattern, making any length alterations necessary.

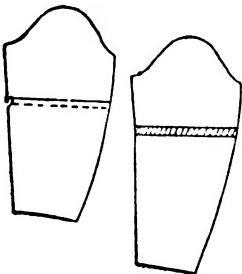
Match the center *front* to the center *back* of the pattern, matching the lower edges. Measure the waistline. If too large, mark off an equal amount from both the back and the front. If too small, take from the back and front side seam an equal amount. Pencil-mark on the pattern for the sewing line. Measure seven to eight inches below the waistline for the hip size, measuring straight across the pattern at this point. The depth of the hip should be measured the same as the individual measures, depending upon the height of the person.

Remember that the pattern represents only one-half of the figure. If the hips measure thirty-eight inches with the

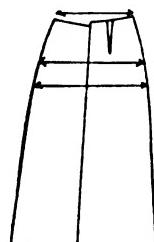
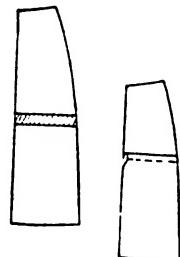
Sleeve



Sleeve length

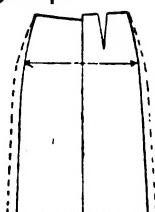


The skirt

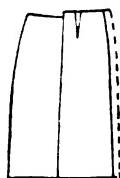


inch allowance, then the half pattern should measure nineteen inches. If more should be added, make an equal alteration on both the front and the back section.

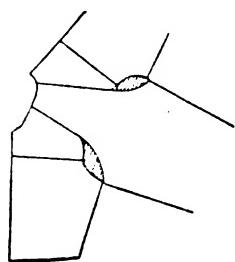
#### Large hips



#### Exceptions



#### Epaulet raglan sleeves



If the hips are large and the pattern does not provide a wide seam for letting out the garment, pin paper to each side the full length of the seam.

Measure across the hipline and enlarge both seams the same amount, gradually sloping the line to meet the waistline just marked. If the hips are made smaller, the line must also be marked.

The figure with the large waistline in proportion to the hip size will require most of the additional paper pasted to the front of the pattern on the side seam, with possibly no additional allowance on the back of the skirt.

The figure that is large in the back and flat in the front at the hipline will require more of the seam allowance on the side of the back and none on the front.

Large thighs will require an equal distribution of the allowance. The figure with the large bust and small hips will have the seam taken up even on both back and front.

All sleeves that extend to the neckline will be fitted in like manner except that all alterations will be made on the front and back sections and not on the saddle of the sleeve.

Most of these sleeves do not fit closely at the armpit. This must be taken into consideration when fitting this type of sleeve. It is very important that the depth of the raglan or epaulet sleeve is sufficiently deep in the *back* from the neck to the armpit. A short sleeve at this point will draw the sleeve back and be most uncomfortable. Follow the rules for fitting the back of the set-in sleeve and let out or take up above the armpit on the waist only. Make no alteration on the shoulders of the sleeve. Alter the lengths as required.

## SUMMARY OF FITTING TISSUE PATTERNS

#### Assembling

Pin all the sections of the pattern together—all the waist front, all the waist back, all the skirt front, and all the skirt back. Also pin the sleeve sections together.

All alterations will be made on the side seams, unless the lengths are changed. These changes should be made first.

1. Fold down the center back at the armhole to secure the depth of the armhole in relation to the back of the neck.

2. Check the depth of the pattern from this line to the neck and make it correspond with the measurement of the individual as taken above the armhole.

3. Measure the pattern across the back between the sewing lines or the armhole; measure both cross-backs.

Mark a narrower cross-back if necessary or paste on more paper for a wider back to make the tissue pattern the same measure as the individual in both the upper and the lower cross-back. Mark with tailor's colored chalk.

4. Measure the underarm seam. Shorten or lengthen this line if necessary. This seam may be lengthened, but it is seldom shortened.

5. Open the underarm seams, then pin the shoulders together. Measure the length of the front and back from the center of the back of the neck on both measurements.

If the front is too long, lift it by taking a tuck across the chest from the center front to the underarm seam. If the individual is short-waisted, also take a small tuck below the armhole from the center front to the underarm seam.

If too short, lengthen the pattern below the armhole only, never at the shoulder, unless a small amount for a sloping shoulder line.

Make extra allowance in all armholes for armhole fitting if there has been a great change in the pattern. (See section on fitting darts.)

6. For the bust fitting, pin the back and front together at the underarm seam only. Measure the pattern across the bustline two inches below the armpits, slightly sloping the tapeline upward in the center back.

Add more seam to the front if too small; take up evenly on both back and front if too large.

Be sure to allow two to four inches to the individual measurements to fit the pattern.

7. Measure across the top of the sleeve. If too small, slash the sleeve the full length down the center and add one-third of the amount to the center and the remainder equally on both side seams.

If too large, reduce the size in the same proportion.

8. Lengthen or shorten the skirt by taking up a cross tuck from center to side seam, or by splitting and spreading the pattern an equal width.

Determining  
armscye

Depth of armscye

Fitting across back

Fitting underarm  
seam

Length of front

Fitting the bust

Sleeve

Skirt

**Waist and hips**

9. Place the center front and center back together, matching the lower edges at the hemline. Measure across the waistline. Add one inch extra to the individual measurements when checking the pattern.

Half the pattern will represent half the body measurement.

Increase or decrease the size equally on both the back and front sections. Mark all alterations with a colored chalk.

Continue any hip or thigh alterations down the full length of the skirt the same amount as altered at the hipline.

## CUTTING FROM A PATTERN BY MAKING EXTRA ALLOWANCE

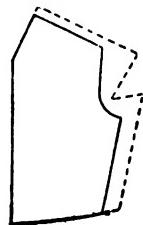
It is advisable always to check the pattern lengths and widths to assure ample material for fitting. If, however, the figure does not vary greatly in length, the pattern may be fitted on the figure by cutting with extra seam allowance.

This type of fitting requires an assistant.

## ALLOWANCES TO MAKE WHEN CUTTING

**Making allowances**

There will be no fitting changes on the inner lines of the dress; all the alterations will be made on the side seams, shoulders, and armholes. As it may be necessary to let out the seam to secure more length or width, there should be an extra seam allowance. An extra seam width is usually sufficient, but if more than this is required it may be necessary to buy a larger pattern. When patterns already have an extra wide seam, more allowance may not be necessary. It is advisable to purchase the bust size, if possible. If the figure has *unusually* large hips, make an even wider seam allowance than is directed. If the back is unusually broad or long, make a wider seam allowance across the back and at the depth of the pattern at the neck in the back.

**Prominent bust allowance**

The figure with a very prominent bust and a narrow back will need to use more material in the armhole for fitting. For this figure it will be advisable merely to *block* out the armhole as illustrated, marking the original armhole curve but not cutting the material except as slashed to the curve in front of the arm. If the dress has a shoulder dart, it will possibly be necessary to make this dart much wider so as to remove the pouch at the armhole. The wider dart will require more material, which must be furnished

by the extra material that was allowed at the top of the armhole. As this extra width is often much more than could be allowed on a wider seam, it is far better to block out the armhole, use the amount of material necessary, and then mark a new armhole after the dart is fitted. Marking the original armhole with a crease or thread and slashing into the curve of the armhole as illustrated will permit the dress and the armhole to be fitted perfectly.

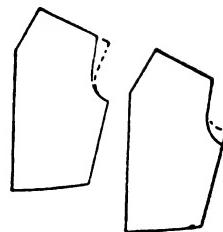
If additional armhole fitting is necessary, and if a shoulder dart is not desired, the extra material blocked out at the lower part of the armhole will be drawn down into an additional dart at the underarm seam.

If the arm is extra large and the pattern does not offer sufficient seam, make a wider seam allowance on both side seams of the sleeve. Also allow an extra half-inch on the sides of the sleeve cap but not at the top.

As the sleeve is difficult to reshape at the cap, it is advisable to purchase another pattern a size larger or smaller, whichever is necessary for the arm, and use the new sleeve as a permanent guide for fitting other sleeves. This sleeve should be fitted at the lower arm.

Measure the width and length of the back. If there is any question about the amleness of the pattern, cut wide seams so that you will be prepared to widen the cross-back, or drop the waist at the center back, or drop either end or both ends of the shoulder in the back, if such adjustments prove to be necessary.

The original sewing lines should be marked so as to space all alterations evenly. When placing the pattern on the material, place pins along the sewing lines so that each pin will rest in the fold of the seam as it is pressed over at the sewing line to form a crease. The pattern should be pinned to the folded goods so as to crease both sides of the dress at the same time. Place the pattern side down on the press-board and press the seam back at the sewing line, creasing both edges of the material. All darts, tucks, pleats, hems, folds, and centers should be crease-marked. For complete instructions see the section, "Marking Sewing Lines."

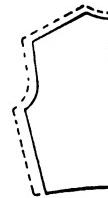


**Armhole allowance**

**Sleeve allowance**



**Allowance in the back**

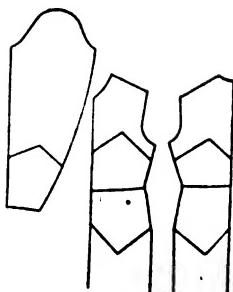


**Retaining the sewing lines**



## PREPARATION FOR FITTING

### Assembling



Assume that the dress has been cut with the additional seam allowance on all underarm and side seams of the skirt (unless altered to the exact size), waist, and sleeves and also on the shoulders and armholes and that the seams have been creased on the original sewing lines and are ready to be basted.

The dress will be basted together in three units: the complete back with the waist and skirt basted together, the complete front with the waist and skirt joined at the waistline, and the sleeves basted together for fitting. The waist and skirt are not basted separately unless they are to be worn separately.

If the waist or skirt is of a symmetric design and has one side overlapping the other, the sections should be matched down the center and basted together as a complete unit for fitting.

A dress should be fitted with both sleeves basted into the dress, as one sleeve does not permit the back to be tested properly for strain.

The dress will be fitted *rightside out*. It is impossible to secure the correct effect when the garment is fitted wrong side out. The underarm and shoulder seams, however, will be pinned together with the seams extending on the *right* side. After the dress is fitted and removed, the side seams will be creased first to one side and then to the other side to secure a correct line for basting, after which the pins will be moved. The dress will then be sewed together on the creases.



### Waist



Measure the waist- and hipline of the dress; if too small, the seams should be let out before fitting.

If the figure is unusually large in the hips and waist, it will be advisable to pin the dress together, letting out some of the extra seam allowance on the hips or waist before the dress is tried on, so as not to strain the material.

The center front should fall in a straight line. If it draws to one side it indicates that one hip is high. (See directions for fitting, Chapter 32.) If the thighs are large, the waist and hips may be fitted closely but should fall loose from the hip-line downward.

Special attention is given to the fitting of the depth of scye; the depth of the dress in the back, from the neck to the line of the armpits, is taken on a straight line across the back. This measurement varies in all postures and in most figures and should be taken into consideration when fitting, as a misfit in this portion of the dress produces many wrinkles, pouches, and drawlings, and much of the discomfort of the garment. The fitting of many garments could be improved if this section of the dress were altered, even if the dress has been completed.

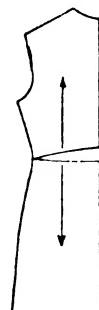
Scye depth



## FITTING THE PLAIN DRESS

A dress must be anchored at the waistline and fitted *upward* rather than hung from the shoulders and the pouches drawn out downward. *All sections* of the waist and skirt will be fitted upward and downward *from the waist*.

Fitting upward



Placket

The waistline is fitted *first*, adjusting it to the desired fitting for the individual. If the waist of the figure is larger than the pattern, the extra seam allowance will be used and the seam let out an equal amount on each side, measuring from the original sewing line. If the waist of the figure is smaller than the pattern, take up the seam equally on each side, measuring from the sewing line as creased.

It will be necessary to open the waist at the left underarm seam on figures that have small waists, if the dress is made with no other opening. This opening at the side will permit the dress to be removed without undue strain on the seams. Great strain is placed upon all seams of a dress if it is removed over the head. Many sleeve seams break out in the back when the dress is removed. This may explain why it is necessary to fit the sleeves with the arms clasped in front.

A figure with a prominent abdomen should have the hips fitted sufficiently loose to permit the dress to fall in a straight line down the front from the waist when viewing the figure from the side. Closely fitted hips emphasize a large abdomen.

If the side seams of the skirt are altered, the same amount of alteration should be made the full length of the skirt.

If the hips are let out one-quarter inch, the full length of the skirt should be enlarged the same amount on the side

Abdomen

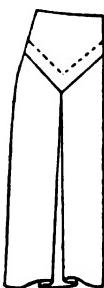


Hips

**Side seams**

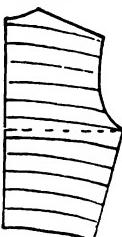
seams. If the hip seam is taken in, the same amount will be taken in the full length of the seam. The figure with larger hips will require the same additional width at the lower edge of the skirt as is let out in the side seam; the figure with the smaller hips will require the same amount reduced from the lower edge as is reduced at the hips. Make all alterations measuring from the original sewing lines. If the right and left sides of the figure are different, the difference will be noticed in the side seam of the smaller side. The seam will not hang straight and will bulge. Adjust the line until it hangs straight.

The side seam of the skirt should hang straight, in a perpendicular line with the floor, and directly on a line dropped from the underarm. The underarm seam of the skirt meets the underarm seam of the waist unless otherwise designed.

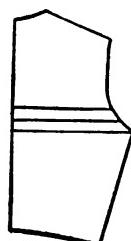
**Hip fitting**

Hip fitting should be tested with the customer seated. Full thighs spread when seated and the dress may be too tight below the hips. This is especially true of dresses with long, closely fitted lines. The fitting should be tested on the figure when it is seated, straight across the lap at the body line.

It is advisable to make longer pleats or higher fullness in figures with large thighs. Otherwise the side seams of the skirt must be let out, increasing the fullness through the thighs for spreading room when seated.

**Back of waist**

After the waistline and skirt have been fitted, the back of the waist will be fitted. If the underarm seam has been properly lengthened or shortened, as directed in pattern alterations, the sewing line of the arm curve should rest up to within one-half inch of the pit of the arm, when the arm is lowered.

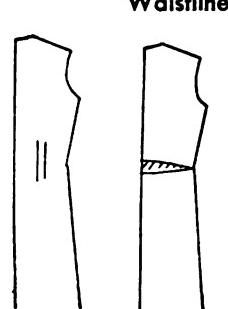


Straighten the crosswise thread of material across the back *below* the shoulders. If checked gingham is used for the first fitting, the thread of material in the checks will be very noticeable. If the thread of material draws upward, open the shoulder seams at the neck and allow the goods to drop until the threads are straight from armhole to armhole. The shoulder seam usually requires lifting at the armhole but not at the neck. The bulge in the shoulder seam is eliminated with darts. If this procedure does not straighten the threads, drop the shoulder seam at the neck.

The pouch of material that appears at the waistline in the back on closely fitted dresses will then be fitted out. It is impossible to fit the concave surface of the back with a flat piece of material. If vertical darts in the back of the skirt are not used, it will be necessary to tuck under the pouch at the waistline and pin out the crosswise dart on the straight line with the belt. Removing the pouch in this manner produces a downward curved edge on the skirt and an upper curved edge on the waist. When the two curves are sewed together in the waist seam, it will fit the curve of the back.

Vertical tucks may be used on a dress that is cut with the waist and skirt in one piece. Extend the tucks both above and below the waistline on both sides of the center back. This method is generally used when fitting a dress without a belt or when fitting stripes or plaids; the method permits the retention of the straight line of the stripes across the hips.

The back has been fitted from the waistline up to the armpits and will now require fitting above the armholes. Smooth the material up the center back and to the shoulder seams at the neck. Let out or take up the seam to fit.



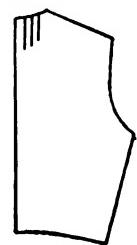
Shoulders

Smooth the material upward and outward toward the shoulders, lifting the material at the armhole so as to eliminate any possible pouch. The square-shouldered figure will require lifting the whole back shoulder seam. The stoop-shouldered figure may require only lifting the seam at the armhole and even possibly lengthening the center back.



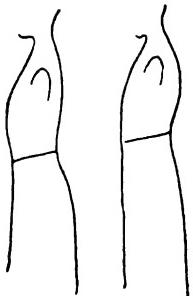
Stooped shoulders

Usually the shoulder seam of the back is one-half inch longer than the shoulder seam of the front, but in fitting the stooped shoulders this fullness may be increased. If the extra fullness is more than can be eased out in the seam, the surplus can be eased over toward the center back and taken up in tucks at the back of the neck.



Front darts

The necessity for darts in the front of a waist is often minimized. Darts are not only used to fit the curves of the bust but are also used to fit the receding lines of the shoulders on closely fitted garments. The necessity for



darts can be seen by viewing any figure from the side. Notice that the figure is on a straighter line in the back from the waist to the shoulders than the front, but the thickness of the body, receding to the shoulders, produces a sloping surface in the front that requires a dart arrangement even though the bust may not be prominent. The straighter the back, the greater the necessity for darts.

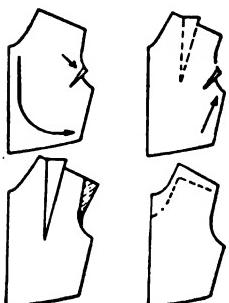
Dart fittings are arranged in various places, often disappearing in the design of the dress. Darts are placed on the shoulders, or under the arm in a direct line from the bust to the underarm seam, either in a horizontal line or sloping downward at an angle. If the underarm dart is large, it may be divided into two or more darts as desired. Several darts are more becoming when placed at an angle.

Darts may also be worked out in various yoke effects, often with the joining seams cut on curved lines. Cowl necks, various draped effects, gathers or darts at the waist, all are used when fitting the curves of the figure. If darts are not used when necessary, the dress will pouch either at the front or at the armhole. This indicates the lack of sufficient dart in the garment.

#### **Additional darts at the underarm when necessary**

All garments except coats can be fitted with extra darts at the underarm if necessary. If the dress has a yoke seam extending to the underarm seam near the bustline, the seam can be fitted in to eliminate the visible dart. The same rule is followed at the shoulder, fitting in the surplus material into any seams of yokes or intricate cuts extending to the neck.

#### **Shoulder dart**



Shoulder dart fitting indicates any front fitting above the bustline, with the dress fitting smoothly down the front, across the front at the waistline, and smoothly around the armhole. There should be one inch ease in the front of the armhole for freedom of motion on all dresses with sleeves. It is, therefore, advisable to provide for this ease before fitting out any pouch at the front of the arm curve. Pin in a half-inch dart in the armhole, which, when completed, will utilize one inch of material. This will not be sewed, as the pin will be removed when the sleeve is set into the armhole. Smooth the material upward from the armpit, around the arm curve, and up to the *center* of the shoulder seam. If there is not sufficient dart arrangement, it will

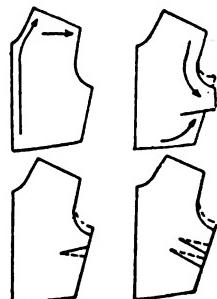
be necessary to use some of the additional seam allowance at the armhole, drawing it over toward the neck so as to remove any pouch at the front of the armhole.

For stoop-shouldered or hollow-chested figures it is often necessary to lift the front of the waist the full length of the shoulder seam, which will also require changing the neckline in front. Darts may possibly be eliminated.

The underarm dart is fitted from the waistline upward in the center front to the shoulder and across the chest, lifting or lowering the shoulder seams if necessary. Pin in the usual one-inch ease in the armhole as described for shoulder darts and join the underarm seams to the back for two inches down the seam. Then fit upward from the waistline on the underarm seam, joining the seam to the back, taking up the remaining pouch of goods that appears at the armhole, and making one, two, or more darts at the underarm seam to match the back seam.

No darts

Underarm dart pulls down from the armpit



## SLEEVES

A plain one-piece sleeve should be fitted well up to the pit of the arm in order to be comfortable, for the closer the sleeve comes to the pit of the arm the closer the dress can be fitted comfortably. A dress that is cut out low under the arm will be drawn up when the arm is raised, and not only will the dress draw across the top of the sleeve, but the strain will pull out the seams and draw the dress out of shape at the waistline.

There are various designs in loose sleeves that will vary the shape and size of the armhole. In using these designs, the armhole of the pattern will be followed, as the dress is not intended to fit closely under the arm and any pouches will not be noticeable. The folds illustrated in the pattern sketch will show this truth, but the front and back sections must be fitted. A tested fitted sleeve pattern will indicate the necessary changes on all patterns.

Altered shoulder seams and refitted armholes usually require a new armhole placement. To mark the armhole, tie a string around the arm, pinning it at the bone on the

Plain sleeve



Loose sleeves



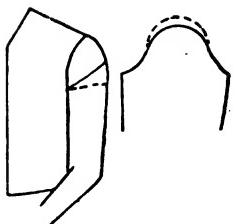
Altered armholes



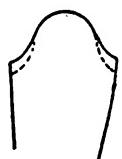
Too tight



Set sleeve on customer



Too-short cap



shoulder. Mark the line of the string in the back as the *arms are clasped in front*, and mark the front with the hands clasped in the back. This will allow for freedom of motion in the width of the cross-back and the width of the chest. The fitted armhole should rest to within one-half inch of the pit of the arm. Remove the pin that has been holding the half-inch dart at the armhole curve in front (see directions for fitting darts), and the sleeve will be ready to set.

If an armhole seems to be too tight, clip into the front curve of the arm for one-quarter inch only. This extra amount will usually remove any strain. *Never* cut out under the arm to make an armhole larger. It will make the armhole larger, it is true, but it will also increase the discomfort of the dress and sleeve and will not improve the fitting of the garment.

Slide the sleeve into the armhole and pin it to the dress, matching the underarm seam of the dress to the underarm seam of the sleeve. Drop the arm to the side and adjust the top of the sleeve to the armhole so that there will be an equal amount of fullness on both the back and front half of the sleeve cap. There should be about three-fourths inch ease in both the back and the front of the sleeve cap to make it possible to fit the sleeve over the curve of the shoulder and to allow for freedom of motion. If the sleeve has no fullness in the sleeve cap, the sleeve will draw in the cap when the arm is brought forward.

If the sleeve is too large, take up the underarm seam, allowing from one to two inches more than the actual size of the upper arm. If the sleeve is too small, the extra seam allowance will be let out on the underarm seam of the sleeve.

As the arm hangs to the side, notice the crosswise threads of material. If the sleeve is too short from the armpit to the shoulder, the threads of material will draw upward in the center of the sleeve and should be dropped from the shoulder to permit the threads to straighten and eliminate the drawing in the sleeve cap. If there is not sufficient seam allowance at the top of the sleeve to permit it to be dropped, the same effect can be secured by lifting the sleeve at the underarm seam.

Fitting the upper part of the sleeve does not solve all of the sleeve-fitting problems. The lower arm often causes more difficulty than the upper arm. The lower arm is not always in proportion to the size of the upper arm in that the arm does not taper sufficiently to conform to the general rules of fitting. A plain, fitted sleeve requires a dart or gathers at the elbow, and the larger the lower arm the larger the dart. The shape of the sleeve varies on the back edge in fitting, as the back edge of the sleeve is let out or taken up more than the front edge.

When fitting the lower arm, raise the hand to the face so as to enlarge the lower arm to its fullest extent. The lower arm will then be fitted the exact size of the arm with no allowance for ease; the raised arm will indicate the exact size of the sleeve.

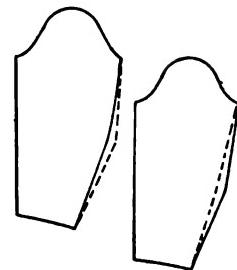
If the lower arm or elbow of the sleeve is too loose, take up the sleeve on the *back edge* with the arm bent. This will reduce the size of the elbow dart or diminish the fullness at the elbow. Let out the back seam if the sleeve is tight.

The sleeve may also be too loose at the wrist. If an alteration is to be made, take out the surplus material from the back edge of the sleeve seam, permitting the front seam to remain the same. The close-fitted wrist requires an opening to permit the sleeve to be removed. If the opening is not desired at the seam, slash the sleeve for two inches on a straight line with the arm just above the wrist bone in the back of the sleeve. This would also be the line used for a long opening with buttons. This line is usually about two inches from the back seam of a fitted sleeve.

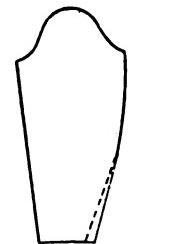
The fullness in the sleeve cap is fitted out on the *bias* sections of the sleeve. The cap of the sleeve is flat for three inches across the top and for three inches under the arm, the fullness being eased out between these sections. Divide up the fullness on the back of the sleeve cap, with the sleeve cap folded under; pin the sleeve to the armhole, gradually dividing the fullness. The sleeve will be basted in from the right side (see section on sleeves).

Open the side of the dress so as to remove it without straining the seams, carefully marking the altered lines with chalk or pins. The length of the opening will depend upon the figure.

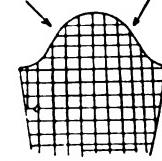
**Lower the arm**



**Flex the arm**



**The wrist**



**Sleeve fullness eased out on the bias**

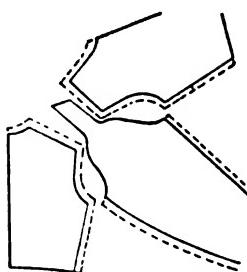
**Marking alterations**

**Noting alterations**

After the dress is removed, carefully notice the chalk mark and changes from the original sewing lines. Write down the exact amount of change on each seam. These notations will be used later to alter other patterns of the same make. Alterations will then be made only on the seams that required altering on the test pattern. The remainder of the seams will not be altered from the original sewing lines.

**Various makes of patterns**

The same alterations will be required for the same individual on the same make of pattern, but the alterations may differ on other patterns. It will, therefore, be advisable to make the extra seam allowance on all side seams and shoulders of all patterns until a test has been made for individual fitting for that pattern.

**Intricate shoulder fitting****Seam allowance on intricate shoulders**

Patterns with intricate shoulders will be handled somewhat differently. Epaulet shoulders and raglan sleeves are made with two shoulder seams; and while the fitting rules are the same, the difference should be explained. The shoulder section of the sleeve will not be altered. The alteration will all be made on the shoulder sections of the front and back of the waist rather than on the sleeve. If the back of the dress is too long, the change will be made by lifting or dropping the shoulder section of the back (not the sleeve). If the front needs to be changed, the shoulder section of the front (not the sleeve) will be lifted or lowered.

Extra seam allowance will be made on the shoulders and underarm seams of the back and front sections; the sleeve will have only an extra underarm seam allowance.

Lift or drop the back or front sections by fitting *upward* to join the sleeve. Join the sleeve to the altered shoulder line.

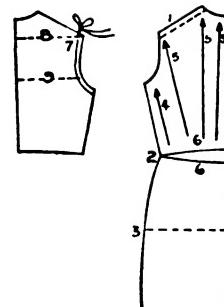
**FITTING SUMMARIZED****Use a mirror when fitting**

Fit before a mirror, even when fitting others. The mirror will indicate defects in fitting that cannot be detected with the eye and will also give the effect as seen at a distance.

**Back fitting**

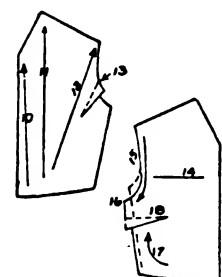
1. Pin the dress sections together on the shoulder.
2. Fit the waistline first. Fit the waist as closely as desired.
3. Fit the hips.
4. Fit from the waistline *upward* on the underarm seam.

5. Lift the four back lengths upward from the
  - (a) Waist to the underarm.
  - (b) Waist to the center back.
  - (c) Waist to the shoulder at the neck.
  - (d) Waist to the shoulder at the sleeve.
6. Pin out a crosswise dart at the waist in the back to fit the concave surface.
7. Tie a string around the arm for armscye placement.
8. Fit the two cross-backs, checking the correct armhole:
  - (a) At the top of the shoulder.
  - (b) Four inches lower.



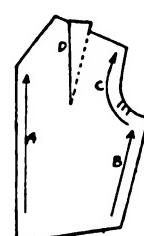
**Front fitting with an underarm dart**

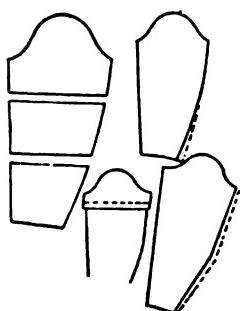
1. Fit upward in the front from the
  - (a) Waist to the neck in the center front.
  - (b) Waist to the shoulder at the neck.
  - (c) Waist to the shoulder at the arm.
2. Pin up one inch of material for looseness in the armhole in front ( $\frac{1}{2}$  inch dart).
3. Smooth across the chest to the arm curve.
4. Smooth around the arm, drawing the material downward until all the pouch is taken out at the armhole curve.
5. Pin the underarm seam of the front and back together at the armhole and for two inches lower allowing two inches looseness through the bust.
6. Smooth the underarm seam upward from the waist, pinning to the back seam.
7. Take up the remaining pouch into a dart at the under-arm. Make two or more darts if necessary.



1. Fit upward at the center front and to the shoulder at the neck.
2. Fit upward at the underarm to the armpit with under-arm seams pinned together.
3. Draw the material around the arm curve, allowing one-half inch dart, smoothing around the arm toward the shoulder. Clip the curve if a wide seam has been allowed in the armhole.
4. Take up the pouch of material at the shoulder into the shoulder dart.
5. Make the back shoulder seam one-half inch longer than the front shoulder seam. Mark a new armhole placement by tying a string around the arm; follow the string with a chalk mark. Clasp hands in the back.

**Front fitting with a shoulder dart**



**Sleeve fitting**

1. Pin the underarm seam of the sleeve to the underarm seam of the dress.
2. Pin the sleeve at the shoulder seam, allowing an equal amount of fullness both front and back of the sleeve cap.
3. Clasp the hands in the front when fitting the sleeve in the back.
4. Clasp the hands in the back when fitting the sleeve in front.
5. Allow one inch freedom through the upper sleeve.
6. Pin the sleeve together above the elbow.
7. Pin the sleeve together at the wrist.
8. Shorten the sleeve if necessary, usually above the elbow.
9. Raise the hand to the face when fitting the lower arm.
10. Let out the back seam (curved edge) if the sleeve is too small.

**Skirt fitting**

1. Hips are fitted after the waistline is fitted.
2. The side seam should hang perpendicular to the floor.
3. The side seam should drop directly below the underarm seam.
4. Allow one inch freedom in hips ( $\frac{1}{4}$  inch on each side seam).
5. Uneven hips will be evident in the hanging of the side seam.
6. Take up looseness on low hip.
7. Make side-seam alterations equally divided, taking up or letting out an equal amount on both back and front on all alterations.

**Intricate designs**

Intricate designs in sleeves are fitted by following approximately the same rules. Fit upward for a fitted waistline. Lift the back, lift the front sections, and fit out surplus material or let out seams on the front or back sections in preference to altering the sleeve lines.

## FITTING COATS

**Coats fit looser**

A coat should be fitted with ample looseness as it will be worn over a dress and will be lined, with even a possible interlining. This extra material must all be taken into consideration when fitting the pattern to individual measurements.

It is advisable to first fit a dress pattern to determine the necessary alterations, if any; then the same amount of altera-

tions should be made on the coat pattern, as the pattern will be made with the necessary looseness for the average coat.

If the pattern does not offer sufficient width through the back or front or sleeves, extra allowance must be utilized on all side seams, the exact amount being determined in the dress fitting. The cross-back will be fitted according to the dress measurements without additional allowance for looseness over the amount allowed in the pattern.

If a dress has not been fitted previously, the bust, waist, and hip measurements of the coat should be made at least two inches larger than the measurements of the previous dress fitting. This procedure will only give looseness for average material, however. Heavy material with an interlining will require a four-inch allowance. The necessary amount of looseness must be judged by the needs of the individual figure.



**PART VIII**

**Ninety-Two Fitting Problems**

## **List of Fitting Problems Discussed in Chapters 29, 30, 31, and 32**

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### **THE BACK OF THE WAIST**

1. Armhole too low.
2. Pouch across the back at the armhole.
3. Pouch in the back at the waistline.
4. Pouch at the underarm seam.
5. Fullness at the armhole in the back.
6. Garment too wide through the shoulders in the back.
7. Dress too narrow through the shoulders.
8. Crosswise threads curving upward in the center back.
9. Vertical folds in the back near the armhole.
10. Diagonal wrinkles from the shoulder blade to underarm seam.
11. Neck and shoulders sliding back.
12. Shoulder blades wrinkle.
13. Diagonal wrinkles from neck to underarm seam.
14. Drawing through armpits across the back.
15. Horizontal wrinkles at the base of the neck.
16. Garment standing away from the neck at the back.
17. Garment too tight through the back.
18. Drawing through the back when the arms are brought forward.
19. Back too short at the underarm seam.
20. Back underarm too long.
21. Back wrinkles on one shoulder.

### **THE FRONT OF THE WAIST**

22. Drawing from the neck to the armhole in front.
23. Dress pouching at the center front at the neck.
24. Pouch across the chest.
25. Front too long.
26. Front sliding back.
27. Waist too long at the underarm seam.
28. Drawing across the chest.
29. Vertical folds in front of the armhole.
30. Shoulders too wide.

31. Shoulders too narrow.
32. Blouse too short in front.
33. Diagonal drawing from bust to underarm seam, at the waist.
34. Pouch at the armhole in front.
35. Dress "hikes up" in front.
36. Shoulder seams "sticking out" at the neck.
37. Armhole too small.
38. Armhole too large.
39. Large bust and small hips.
40. Too small at the waistline.
41. Front too small.
42. Low shoulder.

### SLEEVES AND ARMHOLES

43. Sleeves too large.
44. Sleeves too small.
45. Drawing across the sleeve at the armpit.
46. Sleeves too small for the armhole.
47. Reducing or enlarging the sleeves.
48. Sleeves and armholes do not fit together.
49. Too much fullness in the top of the sleeve.
50. Large arms with small armholes.
51. Drawing across the sleeve cap on a fleshy arm.
52. Sleeves pull toward the back.
53. Sleeves too long.
54. Sleeves too short.
55. Sleeves short in the back or long in the front.
56. Sleeves twisting.
57. Drawing at the elbow when the arms are flexed.
58. Drawing across the top of the arm.
59. Wrinkles across the sleeve below the armhole.
60. Verticle folds in front and back of the sleeves.
61. Diagonal wrinkles across the front of the sleeve from armpit to elbow.
62. Sleeves too tight above the elbow.
63. Sleeves too tight below the elbow.
64. Sleeves too large at the wrist.
65. Puffed sleeves too large.
66. Darted sleeves too large.

### THE SKIRT

67. Patterns too long.
68. Patterns too short.
69. Dress short in center front.
70. Skirt standing out in front.
71. Skirt sagging on the sides,

## **272 FITTING PROBLEMS DISCUSSED IN CHAPTERS 29, 30, 31, 32**

72. Skirt "cupping in" at the front.
73. Side seams drawing toward the front.
74. Side seams drawing toward the back.
75. Deep concave curve in the back at the waistline.
76. Prominence of the abdomen diminished.
77. Hips too tight.
78. Thighs too tight.
79. Hips too loose.
80. Seams bursting at the sides.
81. Pleats drawing.
82. Pleats standing open.
83. Pleats sagging.
84. Skirts "cupping under" the seat.
85. Changing locations of fullness in circular skirts.
86. Skirts sagging.
87. Skirts too long.
88. Shortening flares.
89. Skirts too short.
90. Bias skirts too long.
91. High hip.
92. Fitting slacks.

## CHAPTER 29

### The Back of the Waist

---

Fitting the dress in the back *above* the armpits is the most important part of fitting and is usually completely ignored. The comfort of the dress depends upon the perfect fitting of this section, as the depth and widths vary greatly for each individual figure. Not fitting it correctly will affect the fitting of the front and of the sleeves and even the hanging of the skirt. Therefore, carefully study the problems of the back, for it may be that therein lies the trouble.

**Cause:** The armhole is often cut too deep in the back for comfort when the dress has a fitted sleeve. This does not apply to the Dolman type sleeve.

The armhole should rest well up to the pit of the arm. The top of the underarm seam could be measured with a ruler placed across at the armpit. The top of the material should be even with the top of the ruler. Make this measurement one-half inch shorter for the underarm seams.

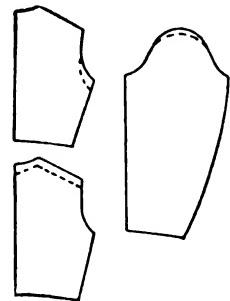
**Correction:** Rip out the sleeve and raise the back until the armhole rests well into the pit of the arm. Repin the shoulder seam as the back is raised sufficiently high to bring the dress to within a half-inch of the armpit.

The sleeve will also be altered. (See section on sleeve alterations.)

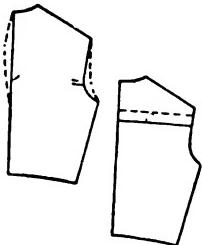
**Note:** "Cutting out an armhole" is a tragedy. These are some of the consequences:

- (a) When the arm is raised, the dress will be drawn higher into the pit of the arm and will produce a drawing.
- (b) The sleeve cap bulges.
- (c) The waistline is drawn upward.
- (d) The sleeve cap draws across the arm.
- (e) The sleeve is tight through the back.
- (f) The dress may burst out in the back.

#### I. Armhole too low



## THE BACK OF THE WAIST

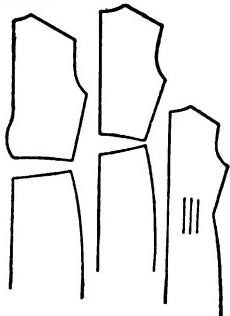
**2. Pouch across the upper back and the armhole**

**Cause:** This pouch often occurs in a dress with a fitted sleeve when the figure is short from the armpit to the shoulders and neck. Overerect figures and those with square shoulders have this difficulty.

**Correction:** Lift the armhole to the pit of the arm. Keep the shoulder line on top of the shoulder and the neckline in place. Pin up each armhole, removing the pouch. Then pin out a tuck straight across the back. If the dress is to be altered, baste this tuck into the material. Rip open the shoulder seams and cut a pattern of the back from the lower part of the armhole to the shoulders and neck. Pin the pattern across the back below the armholes.

While the pattern is pinned to the dress, pull out the basting thread of the tuck and allow the extra material to extend above the pattern. Recut the top of the back by the new pattern.

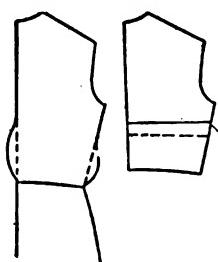
**Note:** Square-shouldered figures, short figures, and overerect figures may have this difficulty.

**3. Pouch in waistline at the back**

**Cause:** This fullness may be caused by the armhole dropping too low or it may be caused by the waist being too long in the center back.

**Correction:** First test the armholes, lifting them to the pit of the arm and pinning a tuck in each armhole and across the back. This procedure will usually correct this type of misfit. If not, then lift the skirt higher onto the waist in a seam or a tuck made crosswise.

**Note:** This fault may be found in overerect figures, which have a short center back.

**4. Pouch at the underarm seam**

**Cause:** This pouch will be found on short-waisted figures, for which the underarm seam is too long.

**Correction:** A crosswise fold must be taken from the pattern or dress at each underarm seam and across the dress.

**Note:** A corresponding misfit may be found on this figure; the front underarm seam may be too long.

**First**—If the figure is flat in front, take out a fold straight across the front in pattern or dress.

**Second**—If the figure is large, lift an extra dart at the underarm seam.

**Causes:**

- (a) Round or stooped shoulders.
- (b) The pattern being too long in the scye depth, or the space between the armpit and the neck.

**5. Fullness at the armhole in the back**

**Correction:** For round or stooped shoulders, raise the back shoulder seam sufficiently to lift out the pouch. It may then be necessary to add tucks at the back of the neck to eliminate the fullness that may appear at the center back. If tucks are not desired, this extra fullness may be eliminated by sloping the shoulder seam slightly toward the armhole.

If the pattern was too long, the dress has been cut too low at the underarm and must be raised at the armpit so as to rest against the arm. Raise the whole back section if necessary. (See No. 1, *Pouch Across Upper Back*.)

**Note:** Stooped figures are also short in front from armhole to neck (see section on front fitting). Small arms may also be found. (See *Sleeves*.)

**Cause:** This misfit often occurs on figures that are narrow through the upper cross-back and wide through the lower cross-back. This figure usually requires a large bust size pattern even though the back is too wide and the shoulder seam drops too low on the arm.

The very erect figure often finds that the back of the pattern is too wide, as the bust is large in proportion to the back.

**Correction:** If the garment has been cut only a trifle too wide, it will be possible to alter the dress by taking up a few tucks at the back of the neck.

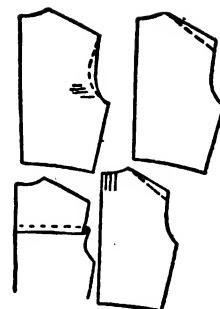
The dress will necessarily be recut for the overerect figure. The back will be too wide throughout and usually is too long in the depth of the back from the neck to the armpit. This is termed the "scye depth."

**Note:** Large bust figures often find this difficulty: the back is small in proportion to the bust and the arms are often small.

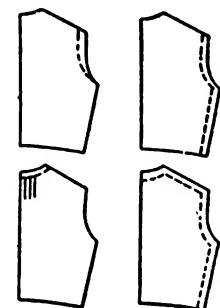
**Cause:** The figure may be unusually wide through the shoulders but small through the bust, and the pattern that fits the bust size will be too narrow through the shoulders. In some cases the back of the individual is as much as two inches wider than the standard measurement.

**Correction:** If the dress has been cut it will be ruined, unless the back can be recut wider, or possibly the sleeves changed to a looser style, so that the sleeve can ride up on the shoulder and thus widen the back.

**Note:** An angular figure without much flesh will often show this misfit. Such a figure should not wear dresses that are closely fitted across the bust; looser fitting dresses



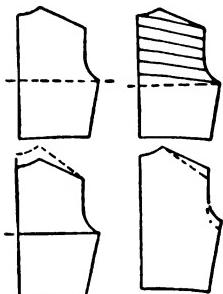
6. Garment too wide through the shoulders in the back



7. Dress too narrow through the shoulders



## THE BACK OF THE WAIST

**8. Crosswise threads of material running up in the back****9. Vertical fold in the back of the dress near the arm**

would be more becoming, even if measurements check with a smaller pattern.

*Cause:* This defect is caused by the dress being too short in the scye depth. The crosswise threads should run *straight* from armpit to armpit. This fault is very noticeable in checked material, as the lines of the checks will run upward in the center back. Coats on stoop-shouldered figures also show this defect, as the lower edge of the coat "hikes" up in the back.

*Correction:* If the dress has been cut with a wide seam allowance, rip open the shoulder seam to the arm curve and *drop* the center back until the threads are straight from armpit to armpit.

If there is not sufficient seam allowance, the following alteration will be necessary. The length of the center back cannot be changed and the sides *must* be raised; therefore, rip open the underarm seams, rip out the sleeves, and *raise* the shoulder seam *at the arm curve* until the thread of material is straight. It will then be necessary to lower the arm curve on the back only. This will lengthen the scye depth.

*Note:* For this type of figure, the dress is often too long in the front from the armpit to the shoulder, while in the back the pattern is too short. (See directions for altering the front.)

*Cause:* This fold is necessary for freedom of motion and is required for comfort. It is visible when the figure is in a relaxed position with the arms at the side, but it disappears when the arms are brought forward, a fact which indicates that, if this fold is fitted out, the dress will burst out in the back or will be most uncomfortable when in motion. The athletic tendencies of the present generation demand comfort.

The greatest strain on the dress is not in the wearing but in the removing of the garment over the head. If this fold is removed, it will be almost impossible to cross the arms and remove the dress. If the dress is opened down the back or wide at the side placket, and if the garment is either sleeveless or has puff sleeves, the dress can be fitted closer in the back and also at the underarms.

*Correction:* This ease should be removed only on sleeveless dresses. Test the lower armhole by holding each elbow in front. The fold will disappear.

*Note:* Before removing this fold, check the fitted garment by reaching. Jersey material or firmly woven woolens

might endure the strain placed on the garment that is fitted closely.

**Cause:** These wrinkles are caused by the *lower* cross-back being too narrow. The upper cross-back may be sufficiently wide, but the figure often enlarges through the lower back, thus producing a drawing.

**Correction:** If there has been sufficient seam allowance in the armhole and the underarm seam, let out the seam so as to widen the back both at the armhole and at the under-arm seam. This alteration will be made for full shoulders.

For sloping shoulders, the back must be raised at the armhole so as to lengthen the scye depth. This can only be accomplished by ripping out the sleeve, opening the shoulder, *lifting* the back, and fitting at the sleeve seam so as to eliminate the wrinkles. Repin the sleeve. (See section on sleeve alterations.)

**Note:** The back may require widening at the underarm seam. Full lower backs often have additional flesh through the back at the armhole and the side seam.

**Causes:**

- (a) The back may be too short in the scye depth.
- (b) The shoulders may be sloping, which causes the dress to be short in the center back.
- (c) The front may be too long from the chestline to the shoulder seam. The front will either be lifted or the back lowered, or both.

**Note:** Watch for sloping shoulders. The armholes are set low. The center back is high. The front may also be short from armhole to shoulder. The crosswise thread of material must be made straight from armhole to armhole.

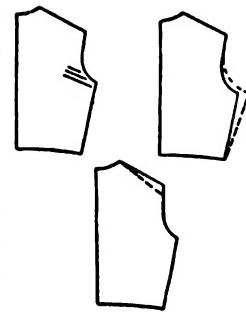
**Cause:** The shoulders may be rounded or protruding, which makes the dress draw upward in the center back and indicates that the scye depth is too short.

**Correction:** If sufficient seam allowance has been made, the shoulder seam can be opened and the center back dropped to remove the drawing. This lengthens the scye depth.

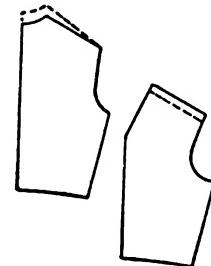
If the dress has no extra seam allowance, the dress must be recut in the back, dropping the armhole of the back only and lifting the shoulder seam at the back. In this case, the front usually must be shortened, keeping the thread of material parallel with the floor at the bustline.

**Note:** Stooped or sloping shoulders should be checked. Keep the shoulder seam on the highest part of the shoul-

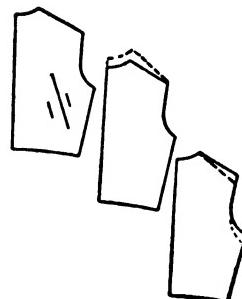
10. Diagonal wrinkles from the shoulder blades to the underarm seam



11. Neck and shoulders sliding back



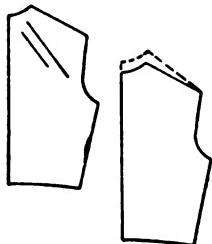
12. Shoulder blade wrinkles



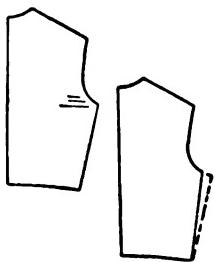
## THE BACK OF THE WAIST

der, the neckline resting where a strand of beads would hang.

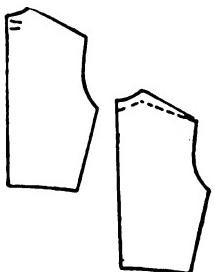
**13. Diagonal wrinkles from the neck to the underarm seam**



**14. Drawing through the armpits across the back**



**15. Horizontal wrinkles at the base of the neck**



**16. Garment standing away from the neck in the back**

*Cause:* Again, the scye depth is too short. This will only be found when the neck fits high and close in front, which does not permit the dress neck to fall naturally. The lower cross-back may also be too narrow. Tight fitting also emphasizes this misfit.

*Correction:* The scye depth must be lengthened. This may be done by dropping the dress in the center back, if there is sufficient seam allowance. If there is not, the back must be lifted and the armhole cut lower in the back *only* so as to lengthen the scye depth.

*Note:* Closely fitted dresses or sloping shoulders may cause this difficulty. Stooped shoulders may also be the cause. Watch for front fitting above the armhole.

*Cause:* This fault is caused by the dress being fitted too closely, and is often found on large figures. When large figures are seated, the bust is raised. If the garment has been fitted very tight when standing, it will draw when seated.

*Correction:* If sufficient seam allowance has been made, let out the underarm seam as much as required to eliminate the drawing when seated. If no seam allowance is available, set in a gusset at the underarm and another gusset in the sleeve, as the overtight sleeve is as much responsible for the drawing as is the tight bodice.

*Note:* Cut a full lower cross-back. A figure with this fault needs extra fullness across the back below the shoulder blades.

*Cause:* This misfit is very noticeable in tailored garments, as the material is heavy and will bulge. It is usually found on square-shouldered figures.

The high armhole raises the garment at the neck; and as the low neck holds the garment down, the garment will bulge.

*Correction:* Rip open the shoulder seam after removing the collar, *lift* the center back, and refit the shoulders until the bulge disappears.

*Note:* Very erect figures have this difficulty. To test, pin up the wrinkles into a fold from shoulder seam to shoulder seam, then cut the pattern and recut the neck and shoulders.

*Causes:* (a) The garment may be too long in the front, a fault which causes it to slide back.

(b) The garment may be too large.

- (c) The neck may be cut too wide in the back.
- (d) The shoulders may be narrow at the upper back.

*Correction:* If the back is too wide or the neck cut too large, take up tucks at the back of the neck. This will draw out the pouch. If it is too long in front from the armpits to the shoulders, open the shoulder seam and *lift* the front to draw out the bulge.

*Note:* Large figures of small stature often have small bones with narrow shoulders. The large dress patterns will be entirely too wide in the upper back, with neck too large and shoulders too long. The whole back should be recut.



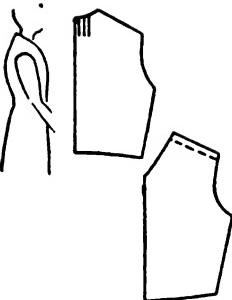
*Cause:* The figure with such a fault evidently has a back wide in proportion to the front, and the cross-back has been made too narrow—either the lower cross-back or possibly both the upper and the lower cross-back.

*Correction:* The back must be made wider. Let out the seam or set in a wedge.

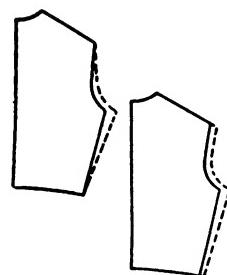
*Note:* If the garment has been cut it is ruined, unless an extra inset can be set in down the center back in the form of a trimming. A two-inch tucked strip of matching material might be used, or a strip cut on the opposite thread of material. In this case, the same trimming should be set downward from each shoulder seam and over the bust, following a straight thread of material.

*Causes:* This fault may be caused by one or more difficulties which could have been avoided had the dress been cut sufficiently large.

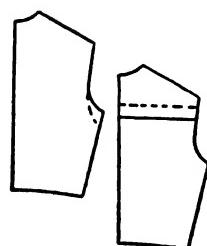
- (a) The armhole in the back may be too low.
- (b) The forearm of the sleeve may have been cut too small.
- (c) The lower cross-back may be too narrow.
- (d) The upper sleeve may be too narrow.



17. Garment too tight through the back



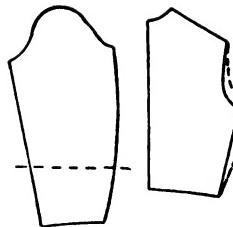
18. Drawing through the back when arms are brought forward



*First correction:* This drawing causes much discomfort on closely fitted dresses. To prove this, lift the back on any uncomfortable dress, pinning up a tuck from shoulder to shoulder (with the sleeve in). Notice the improvement in the feeling of the garment and the freedom with which the arms can be raised.

Open the shoulders, remove the cap of the sleeve only, and *lift* the back of the dress at the shoulder seam in the

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*back* section only. Raise the dress to the pit of the arm in the back.

*Second correction:* Open the sleeve seams *below* the elbow and bend the arms. If the seam spreads, the lower arm of the sleeve is too tight. Let out the seams or cut new sleeves.

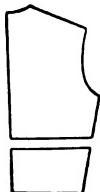


*Third correction:* Rip out the sleeve in the back, put on the dress, and, as the arms are drawn forward, notice if there is a gap between the sleeve and the back. If the sleeve cannot be repinned to the back *with* the arms folded in front, the back is too narrow.

*Fourth correction:* Remove the sleeves and move the arms freely. If the armhole fits closely, the sleeve cap is too small. A larger sleeve must be cut.

*Note:* One or more of these causes may produce the misfit. Check until comfortable fitting is secured.

**19. Back too short at the underarm seam**



*Cause:* Long-waisted figures often find the pattern too short at the underarm seam. If the figure is long waisted, it is advisable to lengthen the waist rather than wear dresses that are noticeably too short waisted.

*Correction:* The pattern should have been split and spread straight across the back below the armholes, lengthening to the necessary depth of the natural underarm seam.

*Note:* A similar change must be made on the front of the dress.

*Cause:* Short-waisted figures will find the underarm seam too long.

*Correction:* A tuck may be taken across the pattern or blouse; recut the blouse back according to the alteration. The skirt may be raised onto the waist.

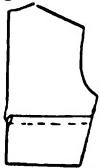
*Note:* When the skirt is raised onto the waist, it is often necessary to then take in the side seam of the blouse.

*Cause:* One shoulder is lower than the other. The fitter should stoop and view the shoulders on a horizontal line, and parallel with the eyes.

*Correction:* Open the low shoulder and lift the pouch from the seam, lifting mostly from the front edge of the shoulder seam. The back seam is not altered unless more than one inch is lifted from the front. Then take one-third of the amount from the back edge and two-thirds from the front edge of the shoulder seam.

*Note:* Test the length of the underarm seam also.

**20. Back underarm too long**



**21. Back wrinkles on one shoulder**

## CHAPTER 30

### The Front of the Waist

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Fitting the front of the dress is complicated by the fact that darts are necessary, not only to fit the curved surface of the front of a woman's figure, but also to retain the straight thread of material across the bust from arm to arm. As you view the figure from the side, you will find that even though the figure may have a small bust size and may not be stoop-shouldered, the shoulders recede noticeably, and this curve must be fitted through the use of darts or gathers or intricate cutting of the front.

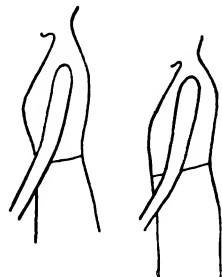
*Cause:* The armhole is either too tight or the figure is very erect, and the front is therefore too short from the waist to the neck at the shoulder seam. Large arms or sloping shoulders also cause this difficulty.

*Correction:* Open the shoulder seam, and if there is sufficient seam allowance, *drop* the front at the neck of the shoulder seam. It may be found necessary to drop the whole shoulder, especially if the figure is very erect.

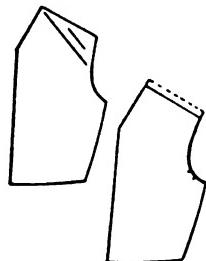
If the arm is very large for the size, the shoulder seam *may* have to be dropped to provide more armhole; or if the dress is broad through the chest, the *front* of the armhole may be clipped one-quarter of an inch. This small amount will provide much more room. *Clip cautiously.*

*Note:* It is advisable to make alterations as suggested—such as lengthening the pattern from armhole to neck, even though it may be shortened from armhole to waist.

*Cause:* Insufficient dart on the shoulder causes this bulging. A wide flat curve in the neckline, when drawn together on the shoulders of the dress, draws the material into a pouch at the center front. The dress should lie flat across the chest.

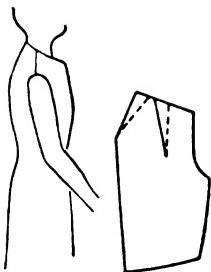


22. Drawing from the neck to the armhole in front



23. Dress pouching at the center front at the neck

## THE FRONT OF THE WAIST



**24. Pouch across the chest**

**Correction:** Open the shoulder seam and smooth the dress across the chest toward the arms so as to remove the pouch. The pouch will then appear in its proper place as a shoulder dart. It can be taken up as a dart or in small tucks. If sufficient seam allowance was not made when cutting, the back of the neck must be trimmed out into more of a boat-shaped neck to match the front; or if there is to be a flat collar, the front corner might be filled in with a patch.

**Note:** It is advisable always to cut a wider neck seam than the pattern allows (marking the given sewing line), as necks are not all the same size.

**Cause:** This pouch usually appears when the figure is seated and may be caused by the figure being very short in front from the armpits to the shoulders or by the dress being fitted too tight through the bustline, especially at the armpits. The oversize arm will also cause a drawing across the chest and will produce a pouch.

Closely corseted figures will find that the bust lifts when seated, due to the compression in front at the waistline. Therefore, the dress should be fitted sufficiently loose to permit the dress to drop into an easy line when seated. A large figure too closely corseted gives the appearance of being larger than it actually is and should not be fitted too tight.

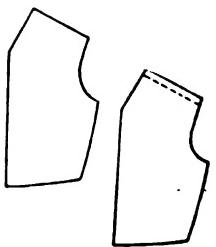
**Correction:** If the shoulder line of the front can be raised without altering the straight thread of material under the bust, then the front is too long; otherwise the front has been fitted too closely and must be let out. If there is no seam to let out at the underarm, nor any material to use for a gusset, it will be necessary to open the center front and set in a vest.

**Cause:** The person with a stooped figure will find that all her dresses will be too long in front from the armpit to the neck. The very short figure will often experience the same difficulty.

**Correction:** Alteration must be made above the bustline if the underarm seam is the right length. Do not draw out the extra length at the waist; this will throw the straight thread of material out of line. Open the shoulder seam, rip out the sleeve, and *raise* the front at the shoulders. Recut the neck to fit.

**Note:** The first test is to raise the dress to the armpits and notice if a bulge appears in the armhole in front. If it does, then the front must be raised at the shoulders.

**25. Front too long**



**Cause:** Figures that are short from the armhole to the neck may experience this discomfort of the dress sliding to the back.

**Correction:** The dress or pattern must be shortened in front *above* the armhole. A horizontal tuck may be taken across the dress or pattern to fit it to the new shoulder line. A paper pattern may then be cut from the tucked dress section, pinning the pattern below the armhole. When the tuck is removed, the extent of alteration in the upper section will be given. Cut from the altered front pattern section.

**Note:** This fitting may be tested in the uncomfortable garment by drawing the back of the neck to its proper place and lifting the horizontal tuck into the dress through the armholes and across the front. As this is often an amazingly large alteration, this test may be necessary to convince the individual that it is necessary.

**Cause:** The short-waisted figure and the short figure will experience this difficulty. The older woman is usually shorter waisted than she was in her younger days; therefore, her patterns and dresses must be shortened at the underarm seam to make them fit.

**Correction:** This alteration should be made in the pattern, taking up a tuck of equal width from the center front to the underarm seam. If the alteration was not made in the pattern, however, the dress will have to be altered at the waistline.

**Note:** The underarm seam may be short, but the front length is required for a larger bust. Therefore, the necessary amount will be lifted at the underarm seam and stitched into an underarm dart.

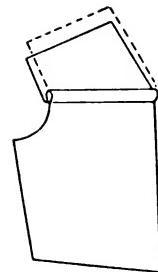
**Cause:** The figure that is overerect, with shoulders thrown back, may find the chest of the dress too narrow, which will cause a drawing through the chest. This same drawing will be experienced by the figure with high chest bones (pigeon-breasted).

**Correction:** These figures cannot be fitted very closely through the chest. Open the front of the armhole and see if the sleeve gaps away from the bodice. If so, the chest is too narrow and must be widened if possible. The hands should be clasped in back when fitting the chest.

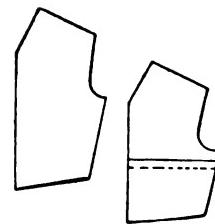
An enlarged sleeve will also eliminate the difficulty.

**Note:** Be sure to have the individual being fitted clasp her hands in the back when fitting the chest.

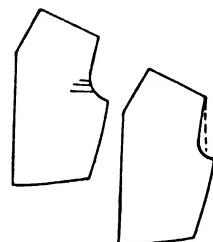
## 26. Front sliding back



## 27. Waist too long at the underarm seam



## 28. Drawing across the chest

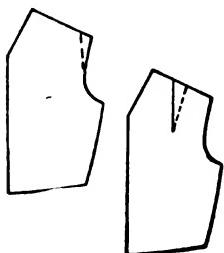


## THE FRONT OF THE WAIST

## 29. Vertical fold in front at the armhole



## 30. Shoulders too wide



## 31. Shoulders too narrow



## 32. Blouse too short in front

*Cause:* This fold should appear when the figure is in a relaxed position; but since it is needed when the hands are clasped in the back, it is obviously necessary.

*Correction:* Do not eliminate this fold. The whole dress may be fitted closer to eliminate both the fold in the back and also in the front if the arm curve is made *very close up* to the arm and the sleeve cap very short. Otherwise, the dress will draw.

*Note:* When the hands are clasped at the back, the extra material is needed. (Very important.)

*Cause:* This fault is often found on the figure with the large bust size but with a narrow *upper* cross-back. The armhole seam will drop down on the arm, while the lower back may be the correct width.

*Correction:* Open the shoulder seams and draw the surplus material toward the neck, taking it up into a dart, tucks, or sheering.

*Note:* For this type figure more dart arrangement is required. The armhole will fit better if the extra material is drawn toward the neck into tucks or darts than if the overhanging shoulders are cut off at the armholes.

*Cause:* Many figures—especially very thin figures—have extra-wide shoulders, even though the bust size is not large. The pattern should be checked through the shoulders *before* the dress is cut and the back made larger, for unless there is a *wide* seam allowed at the armholes, the dress may be cut too narrow through the back and the front—a fault that cannot be remedied. An individual back may be *two* inches wider than the standard pattern.

*Correction:* If there are tucks, sheerings, or darts in the front shoulder, ease out some of the fullness to meet the widened back seam.

*Note:* The angular figure with a wide cross-back is usually hollow through the chest, having a chest measurement that is narrow in proportion to the back. Therefore, it may be possible to recut the back and use the same front by stretching the front shoulder seam to meet the wider back shoulder seam.

*Cause:* The very erect figure or the figure with sloping shoulders usually finds that dresses are seemingly too short in the waist. The difficulty, however, lies at the neck and shoulders, or the figure may be larger in the bust in proportion to the back and the blouse front will require an additional dart at the underarm.

*Correction:* Open the shoulder seam at the neck, releasing the extra seam allowance, and repin. If this does not give the necessary length, then release the extra seam allowance at the front of the waistline.

*Note:* Additional seam allowance should have been made when cutting. The pattern also should have been checked for length.

*Cause:* This type of drawing is caused by insufficient underarm dart and is usually found on the figure with the large bust. The figure with small hips in relation to the size of the bust often experiences this difficulty.

*Correction:* Open the underarm seam and *raise* the front at the underarm into a dart sufficiently large to remove the drawing. The drawing may also be removed by placing a few gathers under the bust, at the waistline.

*Note:* When more dart is necessary, either at the underarm or the shoulder, the additional dart allowance should be made in the armhole and not at the waistline. (See next paragraph.)

*Cause:* Insufficient dart arrangement has caused this difficulty. The dart as given may be correct for the standard figure, but for the figure that is not of standard measurement, especially the large woman, a great deal of difficulty with this problem will be found. The amateur dressmaker often stitches out this dart at the arm curve by making a dart running from the arm curve toward the bust. This always denotes amateurish efforts and inexperience in fitting larger women, but several of these small darts are sometimes used in designing an evening gown.

*Correction:* If the armhole has been blocked out as suggested in the rules for seam allowance, this pouch can be worked out easily. The dress should fit smoothly around the arm curve without any pouch; therefore, smooth the material either upward or downward, and work out the pouch in either an underarm dart or a shoulder dart, whichever is preferred. A tailored style may use the shoulder dart, but otherwise the underarm dart is preferable.

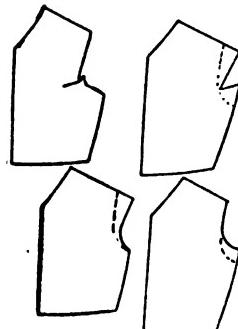
Smooth the material upward toward the shoulder for the shoulder dart, bringing over the extra material that was blocked out when cutting the armhole. Allow at least *one* inch for looseness by pinning up one inch of material (one-half inch in dart) in the armhole when fitting, or smooth out the pouch toward the neck and take up the pouch that appears at the shoulder into a shoulder dart,



33. Diagonal drawing from bust to underarm seam at waist



34. Pouch at the armhole in front



## THE FRONT OF THE WAIST

For the underarm dart, pin up one inch of the pouch for looseness and then smooth out the rest toward the underarm seam, drawing down the extra material in the armhole. Pin the underarm seam together as altered.

*Note:* Extra material must be blocked out when cutting the armhole. *Be sure* to mark the original armhole.

*Cause:* This is caused by the *waist* being too short in the front. The alteration must be made in the waist and not in the skirt.

*Correction:* If possible, the waist should be dropped from the shoulders. If this is not possible, or if the figure is *very* large in the abdomen, the skirt will be lifted at the waistline at the side seam and, while the skirt remains the same, the waist is shortened at the side seam. In a one-piece front, this alteration can be made by taking up a dart at the waistline on the side seam, on the front only.

*Note:* Again the pattern should have been fitted and the necessary adjustment for additional front length made before the dress was cut. Material for an additional dart would then have been allowed, to lift the side seam to meet the back seam.

*Cause:* This condition is the result of square shoulders, the shoulder seam sloping too much from the neck to the arm, or the garment being too long from the armpit to the neck.

*Correction:* The fault can be altered by pinning out the surplus seam at the neck, both from the back and the front of the seam. It may also be necessary to trim out the back of the neck a trifle as the scye depth is short on square-shouldered figures.

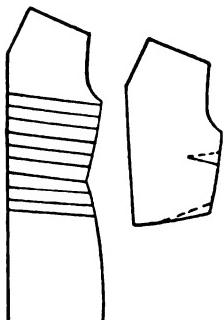
*Note:* When this difficulty is noticed, also check the fitting of the back above the armholes. Usually it is too long. Lift the garment to the pit of the arms in the back, watching the shoulder seam and keeping it on top of the shoulder. Then pin out the surplus material in a fold through both armholes and across the back.

*Cause:* The figure with overlarge arms may find that the armhole is too tight.

*Correction:* *Do not trim out under the arm.* If the armhole is too tight, clip the front of the arm curve one-quarter of an inch. This procedure will enlarge the armhole considerably. Be very careful not to clip too much.

*Note:* Large arms are usually found on figures that are narrow through the chest in proportion to the back; the

## 35. Dress "hiking up" in front



## 36. Shoulder seam "sticking up" at the neck



## 37. Armhole too tight



flesh of the arm fills the arm to the front. Therefore, *never* cut out under the arm; rather, clip the front armhole slightly.

**Cause:** Many armholes are too large. The small armhole is rare, but the large armhole is common.

**Correction:** If the armhole is cut deep under the armpit it will be too large. If it has been so cut, *lift* the shoulder seams and thus raise the dress closer to the pit of the arm.

If there is more than two inches of looseness across the bust, the underarm seams may be taken up a trifle. The evening gown and the sleeveless dress can be fitted closer at the underarm than the dress with sleeves.

If the looseness in the armhole appears at the front curve in the form of a pouch, incorrect dart fitting has been made, which must be corrected. (See *Pouch at the armhole*.)

**Note:** When the armhole is too large, the sleeve is too large, also, and must be recut. (See *sleeves*.)

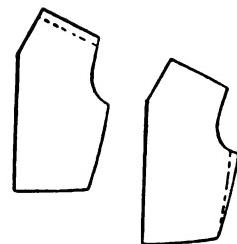
**Cause:** The cause of this difficulty in fitting is that patterns are not cut for this type of figure.

**Correction:** If the dress is to be fitted smooth at the waistline, it will be necessary to lift an additional dart at the underarm seam. It is sometimes necessary to have three darts to fit the large bust.

Gathers at the waist placed under the bust also dispose of the surplus fullness.

**Note:** Fit the waist and skirt in two units. Disregard *notches* for matching waistlines.

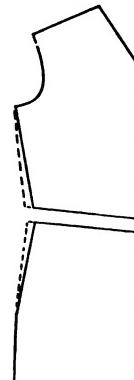
38. Armhole too large



39. Large bust and small hips



40. Too small at the waistline



**Cause:** The abdomen is large. Figures with large waistline increase the size in the front more than the back.

**Correction:** Add to the side seam of the front section when cutting.

**Note:** Measure the figure; also note the waist size of the pattern. If the pattern is two inches too small, then add one inch to each side seam at the waistline only, graduating to the original edge at the armhole.

**Cause:** The pattern size was too small.

**Correction:** If the pattern was measured before cutting,

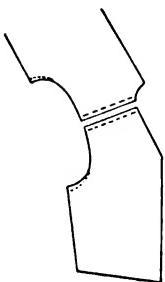
41. Front too small

## THE FRONT OF THE WAIST

the pattern can be slashed down the front from shoulder to waist and spread the necessary amount. The additional shoulder seam must then be Shirred, tucked, or darted to fit the shoulder of the back.

*Note:* Very large women find it difficult to purchase extra-large patterns. Therefore, purchase the desired pattern to fit the back, and enlarge the front. The complete bustline of the pattern should measure at least five inches larger than the brassière measurement of the figure.

### 42. A low shoulder



In fitting a low shoulder, the shoulder seam is opened. The front shoulder seam is then lifted until all puckers across the front just below the seam are removed.

The back shoulder seam is not altered unless more than one inch has been lifted. In this case, take one-third of the amount off the back seam and two-thirds from the front edge.

If one shoulder is lower than the other, the arm may be of different size. Measure both upper arms. If the arm on the low side is smaller, then the smaller sleeve will fit the smaller armhole. If the arms are the same size, the low underarm must be trimmed out from one-quarter to one-half inch on the curve only.

## CHAPTER 31

### Sleeves and Armholes

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**Cause:** The arm may be very small in proportion to the bust size, which will make not only the sleeve too large but the armhole also.

**Correction:** If there is to be much change, a new sleeve pattern should be purchased and the sleeve recut. It is very difficult even for the experienced seamstress to "fit out" a sleeve.

If the sleeve must be altered on the customer, take in the underarm seam, allowing at least *one* inch for ease on the upper arm. Do not change the underarm curve of the sleeve very much, as it will quickly become too small. Make little if any change at the top of the sleeve, and make the seam in the sleeve on the top and sides a trifle deeper than the original pattern. *Do not cut off any of the sleeve cap until tried on the customer.*

**Note:** Fit a perfect sleeve in muslin and preserve it to use as a master pattern for fitting all future sleeves. (See Measurements and Pattern fitting.)

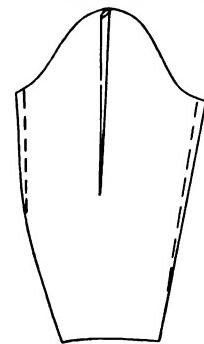
**Cause:** Some figures have unusually large arms, hence the correct pattern size for the body will have a small sleeve.

**Correction:** If the sleeve was cut with a wider underarm seam, it can be let out and possibly be made to fit.

**Note:** It is difficult to secure a perfect enlargement or reduction in sleeve size without using a master sleeve as a guide for enlarging or reducing sleeves.

**Cause:** This type of drawing appears when the arm curve is cut too low at the underarm, which makes the sleeve cap too long and too narrow across the top of the sleeve. This drawing also occurs across the overfleshy arm, because the sleeve cap is too narrow.

**43. Sleeves too large**



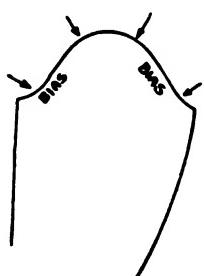
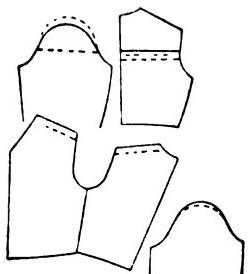
**44. Sleeves too small**



**45. Drawing across the sleeve at the armpit**

## SLEEVES AND ARMHOLES

**Correction:** Permit the sleeve to remain basted into the dress when fitting as a test for the amount to raise. Lift the dress in the back between the shoulders, bringing the dress well into the armpit in the back. Pin this fold into a tuck between the shoulders. Then bring the customer's arms forward and notice that the drawing has disappeared and the dress is made far more comfortable. If the dress is made and cannot easily be ripped on the customer, remove it as pinned, cut a pattern of the altered dress back *above* the armpits, and rip out the sleeves at the top and sides only. Rebaste the shoulders as marked from the new back pattern, which will indicate that the whole back will be raised, both on the shoulders and at the neck.



46. Sleeve too small  
for the armhole

The sleeve cap may now be too long and too large. Run a basting thread around the top of the sleeve cap, basting off one-half inch at the top and graduating the width down the sides only. (Do not cut.) Then baste the altered sleeve line into the armhole, easing in the fullness *on the sides of the sleeves, not on the top*. The top of any sleeve is basted in with no fullness.

**Note:** Armholes that are too large usually indicate sleeves that are too large. If possible, rip out the sleeve and refit and recut (see Number 43.)

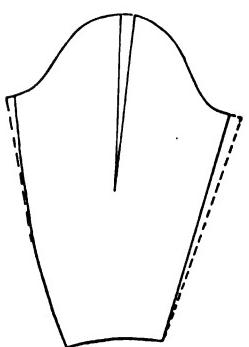
**Cause:** If the dress has been cut correctly from the pattern, the sleeve should fit the armhole with the additional ease that has been given; but if the sleeve is taken in and the body remains the same, the armhole will be too large. On very large arms, the sleeve may fit correctly as to the circular size, but the armhole is too large for the customer. Also, the underarm seam of the dress may have been let out, thus increasing the armhole size.

**Correction:** Whatever alterations are made in the size of the armhole at the underarm seam should be made in the sleeve, unless the armhole size has been reduced.

**Note:** A sleeve cap should measure one and one-half inches larger than the armhole, with three-quarters inch ease on each side on the bias section of the sleeve cap. The sleeve cap fits over the shoulder bone of the arm, and therefore requires this ease to fit the curve. This ease is worked out on the bias sides of the sleeves and not on the straight threads at the top.

47. Reducing or  
enlarging

Sleeves are reduced or enlarged in thirds: If the sleeve is to be enlarged one and one-half inches, then one-half inch



must be added through the sleeve cap, slashing the pattern from top to bottom. Another half-inch will be added to the front seam and still another half-inch will be added to the back seam. This procedure enlarges the sleeve three half-inches. The sleeve is reduced in size by the same method.

*Cause:* If there has been no alteration in the armhole size, nor any change in the sleeve size, the sleeve should fit the armhole.

*Correction:* But inaccurate cutting often causes confusion. An armhole seam allowance cut larger than the pattern will make the armhole smaller, unless the sewing line is marked and the curve of the armhole is clipped into the sewing line to permit spreading.

The same is true of the sleeve cap. Extra seam allowance cut on the sleeve cap will enlarge the sleeve cap until it will not fit the armhole.

*Note:* Be sure to cut narrow seams on all curves—such as armholes, sleeve caps and necks—unless enlarging the size is desired.

*Cause:* Such fullness is usually the fault of the seamstress and not of the sleeve. If the plain sleeve is set in correctly, the sleeve cap will show no fullness. Too much seam may have been allowed on the sleeve cap and the armhole.

*Correction:* If the sleeve is too full for the armhole, it is apparent that the seam was not taken up sufficiently deep. Rebaste the upper part and sides of the sleeve a trifle deeper.

*Note:* Care should always be taken not to increase the depth of the *armhole*.

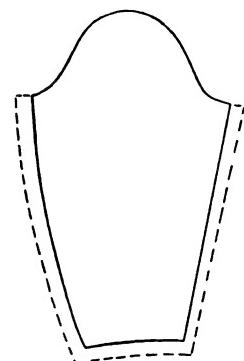
*Cause:* The arm with surplus flesh hanging low on the upper arm requires a *large* sleeve but a *small* armhole.

*Correction:* The fitting of such an arm can be accomplished by fitting the armhole closely and then taking up a small dart in the *under* edge of the sleeve cap. Do not attempt to ease in all the extra fullness in the sleeve cap. There should only be one and one-half inches ease in the whole sleeve cap.

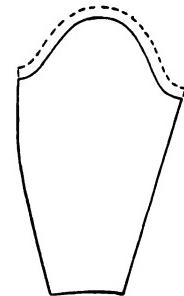
*Note:* If a large armhole is desired, it is advisable to clip the armhole at the front to enlarge it rather than to cut it out under the arm.



48. Sleeve and armhole do not fit



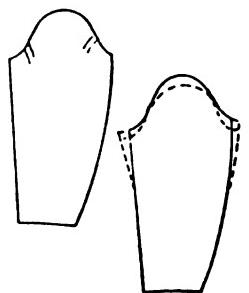
49. Too much fullness in the top of the sleeve



50. Large arm with small armhole



## SLEEVES AND ARMHOLES

51. Drawing across  
the sleeve cap on a  
fleshy arm

*Cause:* The sleeve is too small for the arm. (Arms are often out of proportion.)

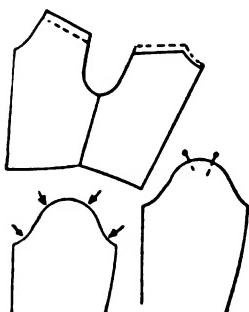
*Correction:* It is very difficult to alter the cap of the sleeve. It is advisable to purchase a new sleeve pattern of a larger size; keep it for a future guide for altering other sleeves and cut *all* sleeves to this size.

*Correction:* If, however, the sleeve *must* be altered on the customer, open the underarm seam and set in a gusset, or let out the seam and lift the sleeve at the cap one inch. Then trim out the lower curve of the sleeve one inch, as a trial. Do not trim off the sides, as they are now too narrow. Trimming out the curve will widen the sides but will shorten the sleeve. The sleeve will then be raised to the armhole of the dress and repinned, pinning off the *top* of the sleeve and not the sides of the sleeve cap. This alteration can be made only on a short arm.

*Note:* Best results will be secured if a larger sleeve pattern is purchased or one is individually fitted to use as a guide for recutting.

*Cause:* This fault is caused by incorrect fitting on the shoulders or incorrect sleeve setting.

*Correction:* Open the shoulders and lift up the *front* portion of the dress at the shoulder seam. It may also be necessary to drop the back shoulder seam. After the shoulders are fitted, drop the customer's arm to the side and smooth the sleeve to the top of the arm, evenly dividing the fullness on the back and the front of the sleeve. Pin the top to position and pin in the sleeve *flat* an inch and one-half on each side of the top. The sleeve must be flat for three inches across the top of the sleeve. Ease out all the remaining fullness on the *sides* of the sleeve, both the back and the front. Note that the shoulder seam does not match the center of the sleeve cap on all figures. Stooped shoulders find the back armhole long and the front short; the overerect figure finds the back short and the front long.

52. Sleeve pulls  
toward the back

## 53. Sleeve too long



*Cause:* The arm is short for the pattern.

*Correction:* The pattern will be altered *above* the elbow unless there is a special design of the sleeve that would throw it out of balance by reducing the length of the top only. Practically *all* arms require the change *above* the elbow. Measure the length of the arm and shorten the pattern to this length by taking up a crosswise tuck across the pattern *above* the elbow.

**Note:** Shorten the sleeve along the crosswise threads of material. Then straighten any angular edge lines on the seams.

**Cause:** The very long arm will find the pattern too short. Figures with extra broad backs often have normal length arms, but the back shortens the sleeve. In this case, it is the cross-back that requires broadening so that the sleeve may be permitted to drop into its normal position.

**Correction:** The sleeve may be lengthened *above* the elbow. Set in a crosswise strip of paper and lengthen the sleeve the desired amount. This must be done before the dress is cut.

**Note:** Keep the pattern lines in their correct places when adding a piece to a pattern section. Place a ruler on the edge, or even cut a newspaper sleeve before slashing the pattern. Then test the edge after lengthening.

**Cause:** When the arm is unusually muscular—possibly the lower arm—the sleeve draws at the elbow or, as some express it, “the sleeve is too short in the back.” This drawing is found on very thin arms, as the lower arm is large in proportion to the upper arm. When the upper arm is closely fitted, the lower arm is too tight and the sleeve will be too short in the back.

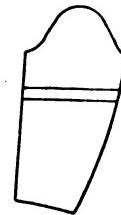
**Correction:** This alteration may be made on the pattern, if one is aware of the necessity for the alteration before the dress is cut. The back of the sleeve requires more curve, and this can be secured by taking up a dart in the one-piece sleeve pattern, making the dart one-half inch at the front of the seam and graduating it to nothing at the back of the sleeve. This procedure will shorten the front of the sleeve one inch, and this additional fullness must be taken up in an additional dart at the elbow. It may then be necessary to lengthen the sleeve by measuring the arm at the front of the seam.

If the sleeve has been cut with additional seam allowance, this extra dart can be lifted in the *back* edge of the sleeve seam and then fitted to the wrist. (See *Wrist fitting*.)

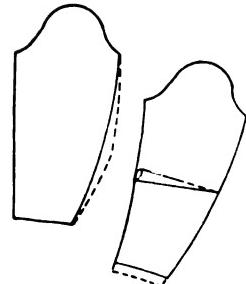
**Note:** Sleeve seams are fitted with the arm flexed. Open the sleeve seam, bend the arm, and let out on the back seam only. The front edge of the sleeve is never changed.

**Cause:** Many sleeve patterns are cut without any fullness at the elbow. If the wrist is fitted closely in such a pattern, the sleeve will twist on the arm.

#### 54. Sleeve too short

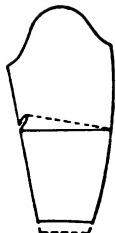


#### 55. Sleeve short in the back or long in front



#### 56. Sleeve twisting

## SLEEVES AND ARMHOLES



**57. Drawing at elbows when arms are flexed**



**58. Drawing across the top of the arm**



**59. Wrinkles across the sleeve below the armhole**



**Correction:** The same alteration will be made on this sleeve as is made on the sleeve that is short in the back. (See Number 52.)

**Note:** The darts in the back edge of the sleeve permit the sleeve to fit closely, with the seam dropping straight down under the arm and matching the underarm seam. They also permit fitting the curve of the arm.

**Cause:** This drawing is produced on a tightly fitted sleeve when there is not sufficient fullness in the elbow.

**Correction:** If sufficient seam was allowed when cutting, this fault can be altered. Open the sleeve from the elbow to the wrist. Take up an additional dart at the elbow on the *back* edge of the sleeve, thus producing a greater curve on the elbow. This procedure may necessitate letting out some of the seam at the elbow and also lengthening the sleeve an inch on the back seam only. The underarm seam will be shortened when the dart is lifted, which will relieve the drawing through the *back* as well as at the elbow.

**Note:** Additional seam allowance should be cut for long arms.

**Cause:** Some sleeve patterns are cut with very narrow sleeve caps. If the arm is large, there will be an uncomfortable drawing across the sleeve cap from the back to the front.

**Correction:** If the dress has been cut with extra seam allowance, the sleeve cap can be let out. Otherwise a larger sleeve must be cut.

**Note:** When cutting for large arms, it is advisable to cut an extra wide seam allowance. Even a closely fitted sleeve should measure one and one-half inches larger than the arm. Large arms, however, are not muscular and can be made as close as one inch larger than the arm.

**Cause:** This fault is caused by the arm being too large for the sleeve. The sleeve is too tight and the armhole is too small.

**Correction:** The sleeve must be enlarged at the upper portion either by letting out the seams or by setting in a gusset.

**Note:** If sufficient seam allowance has been made in cutting, both the sleeve and armhole can be let out at the underarm. Otherwise, a gusset might be set into both.

**Cause:** This fold is necessary for freedom of motion. There will be a vertical fold *both* in back and front when the arm is hanging to the side; but this fold will disappear when the arm is brought to the front or drawn to the back, or when the arms are held over the head.

**Correction:** Athletic tendencies require ease in the sleeves. If these folds are fitted out, a strain will be placed on the dress, which will cause it soon to burst out in the armhole. To prove this point, pin out this ease by narrowing the sleeve cap near the pit of the arm and note the result when the arms are in motion, especially when they are raised above the head.

**Cause:** These wrinkles appear on the fitted sleeve when the arm is raised but will disappear when the arm is lowered. The sleeve should not wrinkle when the arm is hanging to the side.

**Correction:** Some diagonal wrinkles can be eliminated by fitting the sleeve a trifle closer at the upper arm. These wrinkles merely denote looseness in the sleeve if they appear only when the arm is raised. If the wrinkles are in the sleeve when the arm is lowered, however, and are *running downward toward the elbow*, the sleeve cap may be too long or the elbow of the sleeve may be too tight.

**Note:** Check sleeve fitting by moving the arms and reaching.

**Cause:** Some arms are *very* large just above the elbow. The flesh may hang in a pouch in some cases. This arm is often difficult to fit with a closely fitted sleeve, as the arm above the elbow is almost the same width as the upper arm and the lower arm is usually small.

**Correction:** This arm requires a peculiarly shaped sleeve, with a great deal of fullness in the elbow. Open the full length of the sleeve and let out the seam above the elbow, to fit the flexed arm. Small darts, usually three or four, will then be lifted in the back edge of the seam at the elbow. The lower arm will also be fitted as it is flexed. It is advisable to use a sleeve with a vertical dart.

**Note:** If this arm cannot be fitted with a dart at the elbow, cut the sleeve on a straight line from the underarm to the wrist on the back edge, allowing ample seam. Flex the arm and fold out the surplus wrist material into a dart. Trim off for the opening.

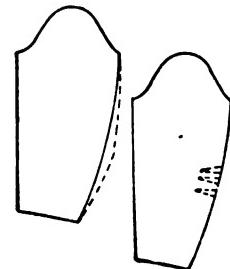
60. Vertical fold in front and back of the sleeve



61. Diagonal wrinkles across the front of the sleeve from the armpit to the elbow

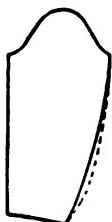


62. Sleeve too tight above the elbow



## SLEEVES AND ARMHOLES

**63. Sleeve too tight below the elbow**



**64. Sleeve too large at the wrist**



**65. Puffed sleeves too large**

**66. Darted sleeves altered**

**Cause:** The thin arm is more muscular than the fleshy arm and enlarges more when drawn up; hence the tightness on the lower arm when the arm is bent.

**Correction:** The sleeve must be enlarged *below* the elbow by letting out the back edge of the sleeve. If the additional seam has been allowed, the sleeve can be opened below the elbow and the back edge of the seam curved out sufficiently to fit the arm as the arm is held up to the face.

**Note:** Enlarge on the back seam only; retain the original line of the front edge.

**Cause:** Many patterns do not give the fitted wrist so desired in a fitted dress.

**Correction:** This alteration may be made on the *back* edge of the sleeve seam from the elbow to the wrist. Draw the back of the seam under the front edge, retaining the line of the front edge of the sleeve. This will make a more bias seam line in the back. Take up the surplus in a dart at the elbow, or trim off at the wrist.

**Note:** Twisting seams result from taking a deeper seam on *both* front and back edges of the sleeve.

**Cause:** The armhole may have been reduced in size.

**Correction:** Reduce the sleeve size in thirds. (See *Sleeves too large*.) Measure the arm out of material removed from the armhole in fitting. If two inches was removed from the armhole, approximately two inches will be removed from the sleeve size.

**Note:** Allowance must be made for the puff in puffed sleeves.

The same rule is followed in all sleeves as is used in plain sleeves. The sleeve cap may be reduced or enlarged. The darts must then be respaced, with the center dart in the center of the sleeve.

## CHAPTER 32

### The Skirt

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A dress made with the waist cut in one with the skirt must be altered without recognizing any definite waistline, except at the side seams. Unless the dress has been cut with additional seam allowance at the neck and shoulders, it may be necessary to sacrifice in the length at the hem when fitting.

This truth emphasizes the importance of making additional seam allowance as directed, for if the waist and skirt are cut separately, no provision for a waist alteration will have been made. In fact, no provision should be made, except for the figure with the prominent abdomen or to shorten a waist at the side seams.

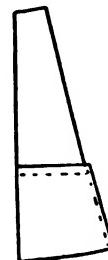
The waist and skirt should be joined together at the waistline permanently before fitting, as all alterations will be made elsewhere. (See the section on fitting.)

Patterns should be measured at the center back and altered to fit the measurement as desired. Fold the pattern at right angles to the lengthwise thread of material, place a paper along the lengthwise, and chalk a colored line at the crosswise. Fold the pattern on this line, shortening the desired amount. Pin closely or stick with tape (do not paste as it will shrink the pattern). The side lines will then be uneven. Place a ruler along the upper edge and continue the line through the altered bottom. This will reduce the lower edge length; but a shorter skirt should not be made as full as a longer skirt.

Long-waisted figures require longer patterns than do figures of normal proportion. When the extra length is

#### Skirt fitting

#### 67. Patterns too long



#### 68. Patterns too short

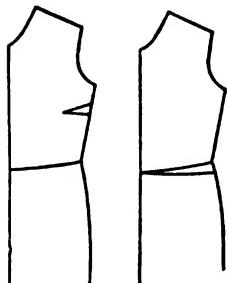
## THE SKIRT

needed in the waistline, it is usually necessary to slash and spread the pattern horizontally between the armhole and waistline. This method will retain the designed fullness at the waistline.

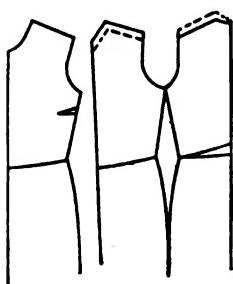
Tall figures often require longer skirts in proportion to the figure. The waist length may be normal. In this case the skirt only is lengthened.

A longer skirt requires more fullness than does a shorter skirt. Therefore, add more pattern to the hem edge and mark a continuation of the edges on this additional paper. The pattern may be slashed and spread, but the lower edge should be made wider to correspond with the side seams above.

**69. Dress short in center front**



**70. Skirt standing out in front**



**71. Skirt sagging on the sides**

*Cause:* If the dress is short in the center front, it is due to insufficient length from the shoulder to the waistline and *not* from the waistline to the hem, as is supposed. The dart at the underarm was not raised sufficiently to straighten the thread of material under the bustline; hence the sagging at the side and the shortness in front.

*Correction:* Open the side seam and also the underarm seam so that an additional dart can be raised at the bustline in the front. If the figure has a prominent abdomen, this dart can be taken at the waistline.

*Note:* Had the waist been lengthened, the skirt would not be short. Rip the waist from the skirt to determine the amount needed. A belt might be set in.

*Cause:* This fault is usually found on loosely fitted skirts and when a figure stands with rounded shoulders, flat seat, and prominent abdomen. It also occurs on a garment cut straight with no dart arrangement.

*Correction:* Rip open the side seams and lift the seams at the bustline, making a dart. If the figure is of the fatigue-posture type, the front of the waist may have to be raised at the neck and shoulders. The back also may require lengthening at the neck and shoulders.

*Note:* One who is interested in well-fitted clothes and a trim appearance should improve the posture with a well-fitted corset. Poor posture can easily ruin the effect of a dress.

*Cause:* A dress short in front will sag on the sides. Loosely woven material will sag on the seams. Circular skirts will sag in the bias section.

**Correction:** If the waistline is fitted correctly, then the side seams must be marked for a new hemline.

**Note:** Circular skirts sag more on the bias of one side of the circle. Crosswise threads stretch more than lengthwise threads. Therefore, a circular skirt will have more sagging on one side than the other if the straight part of the circle is in front.

**Cause:** This difficulty is often encountered on the figure with the prominent abdomen when the hips are fitted too close. This type of figure should not wear the skirt with a molded hipline; rather, the fitting at the hips should be a trifle looser.

**Correction:** If there is sufficient seam allowance, it is advisable to let out the side seams until the front drops into its correct position, hanging straight down from the waist.

**Note:** Correct corseting will improve this figure.

**Cause:** Posture causes this difficulty—the fatigue posture in this case, where the seat is flattened and the abdomen protrudes. This posture throws the back of the skirt in and the front out.

**Correction:** The back of the skirt should be raised at the beltline and at the side seams. This procedure will lengthen the front in proportion to the back and sides and will straighten the seams at the sides. The side seams should hang perpendicular to the floor.

Lengthening the waistline in front or lifting the side seam at the front will be helpful.

**Note:** Since a prominent abdomen draws the seam toward the front, the front side seam may require widening.

**Cause:** Posture also causes this difficulty. The sway-back figure usually has a large seat, and the extra material needed in the back will draw the seam toward the back. The additional length needed in the center back for this figure also draws up the material in the center and draws back the side seams.

**Correction:** The front of the skirt, or possibly the whole front, must be lifted at the shoulders. The main fitting will be made in the back at the waistline either by a crosswise dart, fitted to the curves of the body, or by darts made in the skirt at the side back. A separate skirt for this type of figure should be made with darts on both sides of the center back.

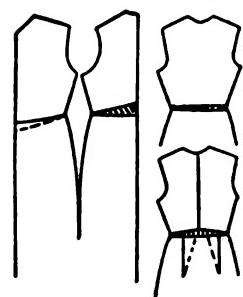
72. Skirt "cupping in" in front



73. Side seams drawing toward the front



74. Side seams drawing toward the back



## THE SKIRT

rather than with a waistline closely fitted on the sides. The darts will insure keeping the crosswise thread of material *straight* at the hips from side to side.

*Note:* The full-back figure may require more seam allowance on the side seams of the back.

75. Deep concave curve in back at waist

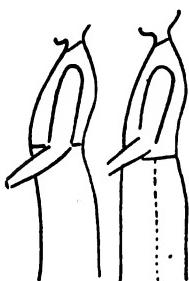


*Cause:* This deep curve in the back at the waist is prominent because all of the bodily curves are shown. This type of figure usually has a large abdomen also.

*Correction:* This defect can be corrected by "optical illusion." Drop the waistline for two or three inches below the natural waistline both in the front and in the back. This procedure will lengthen the waistline, and the deep curve of the back will be covered.

*Note:* The slight enlargement of the waist size will be minimized in the apparent reduction in the size of the seat.

76. Prominence of the abdomen diminished



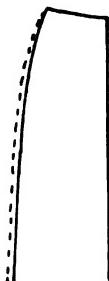
*Cause:* The garment has been made so as to emphasize the abdomen, and the design should be altered to produce a different effect.

*Correction:* The waistline should be lowered. This figure should never wear a defined natural waistline. In lowering the waistline, the curves of the body are less emphasized and the lines are straighter.

The prominence of the abdomen is also greatly diminished if the dress is fitted looser. This type of figure should not wear molded lines. The dress should fall almost straight down from the waist to the hem. It should not cut under below the abdomen.

*Note:* Closely fitted hips and skirts too often overemphasize faulty posture and disproportionate figures. Cut wider seams, let out the skirt, and note the improved effect.

77. Hips too tight



*Cause:* Many figures are larger in the hips than in the bust in pattern proportions. For such figures, the pattern may be too small in the hips. The dress, therefore, should be cut larger through the hips.

*Correction:* If the dress has been cut with ample seam allowance, the side seams can be let out. The pattern should be checked and extra allowance made when cutting.

*Note:* Hip measurement is taken from seven to eight inches below the waistline at the side seam. Do not take a tight measurement. The skirt should fit at least one to two inches larger than a corset measurement, as usually taken.

*Cause:* Many figures are heavy in the thighs—about four inches *below* the hipline. Such a figure spreads greatly when seated and, if the dress is fitted closely at the hipline, the side seams will be too tight when the figure is seated.

*Correction:* This figure requires more slant to the side seam than does the average figure. Skirts for such a woman cannot be cut as straight as for the woman with small thighs, even though her hips may be large. There must be room for spreading *below* the hipline. This will make the lower edge of the skirt wider, as it is usually necessary to add at least two inches at the hemline on the side of each side seam. This procedure will enlarge the lower edge of the skirt eight inches. Extra allowance must be made when cutting the garment.

*Note:* Large thighs are not apparent when standing, but the muscles of the thighs flatten and spread when the figure is seated. Therefore, test the fitting when seated. To test, measure the figure when standing and again when seated.

*Cause:* Many figures are larger in the bust than in the hips in relation to the pattern. This fault will require alterations on the side seams.

*Correction:* The side seams must be fitted closely. The line of the seam should run straight down the side from the underarm to the floor. If the figure is large through the front, the alteration will be made on the back portion of the seam only. If the figure is large in the back, the alteration will be made on the front seam only.

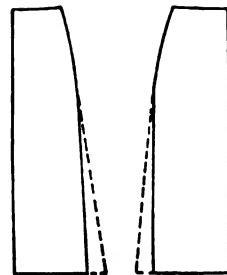
*Note:* Any alteration in the hipline, whether in increasing or decreasing the size, should be carried straight down the side seam and through the hem. If one inch is removed for the seam at the hipline, then one inch should be removed the full length of the skirt.

*Cause:* This trouble is caused by the thighs being fitted too closely. Seams seldom split if the hipline only is fitted close. The strain is below the hipline.

*Correction:* The side seams should be cut wider to allow for the spread of the thighs when seated. Raise the skirt if possible. This allowance must be made when cutting the garment.

*Note:* Test the skirt when seated. Open the seam at the thigh line—four inches below the hips—and note the spreading thighs. This figure cannot wear closely fitted side seams. The skirt may be fitted closely at the hipline

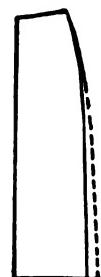
### 78. Thighs too tight



### 79. Hips too loose



### 80. Seams bursting on the side

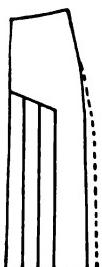


(seven-inch line), but it must immediately start to increase from that point downward. The extra material will fall into a fold at the sides when standing.

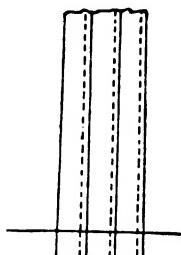
### 81. Pleats drawing



### 82. Pleats standing open



### 83. Pleats sagging



*Cause:* This again is usually caused by the thighs being full and the figure spreading when seated.

*Correction:* No change should be made on the pleats, but the side seams should be widened. Allow two inches at the hemline. Draw a straight line from this mark to the hip-line for a new side seam.

*Note:* Pleats should be considered as a flat piece of the skirt and should be fitted as they are *basted* together. If the closely basted pleats draw, then the skirt also will draw when finished.

*Cause:* If pleats are not basted *flat* along the edges and pressed before they are set into the dress, or before they are stitched across the top, they will surely spread when the figure is seated. Tight thighs may also be the cause. A long waistline also may cause this difficulty.

*Correction:* If the dress is made, the pleated section must be ripped out and basted *flat* and pressed before it is set into the dress. Be sure to *press* the top of the pleats before stitching them down. To test for tight thighs, open the side seams from the hips down and see if the skirt spreads. Also try lifting the skirt higher onto the waist in the center front.

*Note:* Notice the improvement in the hanging of the pleats when the skirt is fitted correctly.

*Cause:* The lower edge of pleats will sag on the under side of the hem unless the pleats are made correctly.

*Correction:* Rip out the hem. Baste each pleat down the outer edge to the edge of the material with the hem open. After the pleats are basted to the lower edge, the mark for the hem will then be made across the pleats and the hem will be *pressed* in with a warm iron into the basted pleats. Do not remove the bastings until the hem is pressed in. Press in the hem, remove the bastings, and baste the hem up on the *crease*. Make the hem and press it. (See section on pleats.)

*Note:* When the hem is folded back into the basted pleats, each back fold of a pleat is drawn upward a trifle. This is the tailor's secret. When the hem is then basted in after the pleat bastings are removed, each pleat edge will follow the *creased* line and each back fold will be a trifle shorter

than the front. This makes the keen hem edge in pleats.

**Cause:** Posture may cause this difficulty when the abdomen is thrust out and the back is flattened. The skirt will then pouch out in the front and drop in below the seat in the back. The hips and thighs of the skirt may also be too tight.

**Correction:** This fault can be corrected by lifting the back at the waistline either with a crosswise dart at the waist or by lifting the whole back. If the hips or thighs are too tight, the seam must be let out or the skirt must be raised at the waistline.

**Note:** Tight hip fitting develops unnecessary bulges in a garment.

#### 84. Skirt "cupping under" the seat



**Cause:** The difference in the draping qualities of material often produce the undesired effect in the fullness on a circular skirt.

**Correction:** The circular section is usually set onto a yoke. The location of the fullness can be changed by ripping off the yoke and *lifting* the circular section in the place where it is desired.

**Note:** Skirt fullness can thus be shifted from the side of the skirt to the front by lifting the circle at the top edge.

#### 85. Changing location of fullness in circular skirt



**Cause:** Skirt sagging may be caused by posture if the dress is new, or the material may have been drawn out of shape in cleaning, or the dress may not be fitted correctly at the shoulders, or the material may be sagging on the bias.

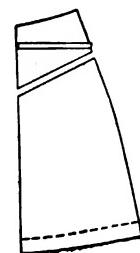
**Correction:** If the dress has been fitted according to the rules given herein, the material may be sagging on the bias and the skirt will require rehanging.

**Note:** Stretchy material is very unsatisfactory in a garment.

**Cause:** Be sure that the waistline is fitted correctly before judging the skirt. Fit the waistline first.

**Correction:** The skirt can be shortened two inches without destroying the design of the garment; but further shortening would be detrimental, unless the skirt yoke is also altered. In this case, one-third should be taken from the yoke and two-thirds from the lower edge of the skirt. The pattern should be altered before the dress is cut, to save material.

#### 86. Skirt sagging



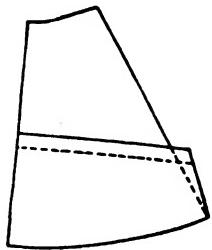
#### 87. Skirt too long

*Note:* Long skirts may be shortened either at the hemline or the waistline.

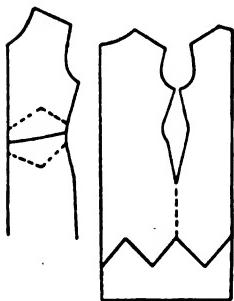
Shortening a hemline will also reduce the fullness in the lower edge of the skirt. This is important in bias-cut skirts. A straight-line skirt can easily be rehemmed to a shorter length, as a shorter skirt does not require as much fullness as does a long skirt.

Mark the hem, press it, trim it off, and sew it (see section on hems).

#### 88. Shortening flares



#### 89. Garment too short



*Cause:* Circular flares should be shortened in the pattern if possible. If the fullness is all cut from the lower edge, the fullness will be sacrificed.

*Correction:* Measure the pattern down the center front and center back to determine the amount to be shortened. Fold the pattern on the center line about half the distance between the hem and the upper edge. Make the fold *even* along the center edge, then flatten the fold or tuck across the full width of the pattern. It will not run straight with the hemline, but it will be straight with the thread of material. A new side line can be made joining the uneven line made by the fold.

*Note:* Note changes on the side seam.

*Cause:* This alteration is more difficult if the dress has been cut or if a short dress is to be remodeled.

*Correction:* It is always advisable to lengthen the pattern before cutting the dress. Unless a hem has been allowed, the short dress may prove a tragedy. There are few ways in which a dress can be lengthened without being noticed. If a yoke effect is set into the skirt to lengthen it, then some of the same material should be used in the waist and sleeves to balance the design.

Most fashion papers offer designs that can be used for remodeling, making separate waists and skirts or combining two different materials in a garment. It would be advisable to select one of these patterns and follow it as closely as possible.

Coats can be lengthened more easily than can skirts. A piece can be set on the lower edge in a pointed design, so as to make it appear that the coat was so designed. The material should match the coat material as closely as possible. If it does not match, the same material should be used for collar and cuffs.

Bias-cut formals may be altered to a shorter length. Rip the skirt apart. Cut a pattern of the upper section. Measure the length desired, especially in the center back. Drop the pattern to this line and recut.

*Cause:* A spinal curvature, though scarcely noticeable, may make the skirt twist; one hip is larger than the other.

*Correction:* Cut wider hip seams, the amount depending upon the disproportionate figure. Mark the original sewing lines. The extra allowance will be let out on the large hip; the original sewing line or less will be used for the low hip fitting.

*Note:* The center front and center back will thus be kept on a straight thread of material. A fitted gingham check could be fitted and used as a guide for fitting skirts.

The varying proportions of women's figures from crotch to waistline will complicate the fitting of slacks. The pattern for slacks should be purchased according to the hip size, if the waist is small. If slacks do not ordinarily fit and are uncomfortable, it is advisable to cut a pair of unbleached muslin slacks and fit them according to the following instructions.

Slacks are fitted from the crotch *upward*, just as blouses are fitted from the armhole *upward*. Fit the waist first. If the hips are large in proportion to the waist, darts should be taken in the back on each side of the center-back seam. Lift the crotch to a comfortable position, then fold out the surplus material that will bulge between the crotch and waist and pin in a horizontal tuck straight across the slacks from center front to side seam. Make a straight fold of even width, unless the thighs are large. In this case, the fold will decrease in width at the hip seam.

The back often remains the same on full thighs or full backs; but in short figures, this fold will also be taken up along the straight thread of material from side seam to center-back seam. Assistance will be required to make the necessary fold through the back section. Sit down to test the fitting before removing the trial fitting in the muslin.

Remove the slacks and rip them apart; press the folds and stitch these fitted folds flat. Even up the lines of the slack pattern across which the folds were made (similar to the way in which circular skirts are shortened). Retain this muslin pattern as a guide for all future fitting of slack patterns.

90. Bias skirts too long

91. High hip

92. Fitting slacks



**PART IX**

**Remodeling; Sewing Commercially**



## CHAPTER 33

### Remodeling

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Economy in dress does not rest in the original cost alone but also in the span of life of the fabric from which garments are made. It is wasteful to discard good fabric in clothing if it can be put to good use. Good fabric can be used over again for making many attractive garments that may not even resemble the original model. Then, too, children's clothes can be made from garments that have been discarded by their elders.

**Economy**

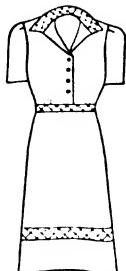
The fabric should be thoroughly cleaned *before* it is remodeled. Worn or faded portions will then be more evident. It is more sanitary to work with clean than with soiled fabric, and the finished effect in the making is far more attractive. Do not wash the fabric until a scrap has been tested by washing and pressing. If washing is found to be satisfactory, immerse the goods in luke-warm suds made from a mild soap and rinse well. Wool should be rinsed in luke-warm water to which one teaspoonful of borax to the gallon has been added. The borax makes the wool soft to the touch and hence easier to sew.

**Cleaning**

The garment may be washed or cleaned before ripping, but it should be ripped before pressing. In many places, the extra material on the seam may be needed to cut the section. Ripping is not a difficult task (see section on ripping). Press each section flat, removing all darts, tucks, pleats, and hems. Impressions made in the fabric must be removed with damp pressing in many cases; even a wet cloth may be required to remove the imprint.

**Ripping**

The garment should be ripped slowly and carefully. Do not discard small sections such as collars, facings, pockets, and belts. Each may fill a purpose before the garment is finished.

**Extra fabric****Colors****Textures****Figured fabrics****Contrasting material**

The material may be ample if the garment is to be made small in the same model, but if it is to be made larger or changed in the design, some of the pattern sections may not fit, and extra material must be used.

A few simple rules should be followed when combining fabrics. Choose the same type of fabric when possible, a darker or lighter shade, in the same tone or in a contrasting color, if that color is carefully chosen. When choosing color contrasts, it is advisable to secure the advice of a stylist or buyer in a store that sells fabrics. Such individuals are always eager to make you happy in the selection of your fabrics, for a disappointment in the finished garment may mean a lost customer.

It is sometimes necessary, however, to choose colors without the aid of competent advice. In this case, keep Nature's harmonies in mind. Nature never makes an error in combining colors in one unit, such as leaves on a tree in autumn, a colorful bird, multi-colored flowers, and so on. Softened, or grayed, tones of all colors blend together more pleasingly than do brilliant shades. Soft tones should be combined with soft tones, and if the color of the dress is brilliant, it is advisable to resort to white rather than to use another bright color.

Combine similar fabric textures when possible: combine gingham with gingham, chambray with chambray, poplin with poplin, rough crepe with rough crepe, faille with faille, flannel with flannel, tweed with tweed, velvet with velvet, and so on.

It may be necessary to combine new material with figured fabrics when remodeling. This offers an excellent opportunity to combine plain shades with figures. If it is necessary to use a large quantity, such as complete sleeves or a wide front panel in the waist or in the waist and skirt, it is advisable to select the same type of fabric in the plain color of the background. If the fabric is flat crepe, buy plain-colored flat crepe for the trimming; if figured jersey, choose plain jersey to match the background of the figured fabric, and so on. Bright colors are seldom used in large quantity on a figured dress. If a bright color is to be used, select the exact match of one of the colors of the trimming.

When it is necessary to use more than a small amount of extra material merely as a trimming, that larger amount

can be used in several ways. The dress may be used as a jumper by adding an underblouse with sleeves, vest, and collar of a contrasting fabric or in white. A complete front may be used, or a portion of the front may extend the full length of the skirt. A wide vest effect may be used, shirring into half of the shoulder seam and draping in folds over the bust to gathered fullness at the waistline.

A figured dress, with sleeves removed and neckline cut low, may be used as a slip under a sheer overdress or redingote that closes to the throat.

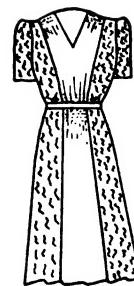
A figured dress may be made into a slip by cutting out the sleeves and trimming the neckline lower, then dying to a dark shade to wear with dark dresses.

Patterns for remodeling are usually offered for sale in the various fashion books, especially the inexpensive patterns. Search for a pattern that meets the needs of the larger sections of the fabric. It is advisable not to alter the skirt unless necessary. Find a pattern that illustrates different materials in the garment sections: the addition of extra material in yokes, sleeves or sleeve sections, vests, inset strips, inset belts or belt effects, inset panels, scalloped edges on hems used as facings, jumper effects, front vest with collar attached, and innumerable variations that change with the seasons. When the principle of improvising in remodeling is learned, any variations from the projects that are given here can easily be understood.

A pattern for a remodeled dress often must be improvised, that is, made from the sections at hand to fit into the given spaces. The varying cuts of garments seldom exactly fit all of the given sections of another pattern, therefore the pattern must be improvised to fit the needs at hand.

When the garment is to be cut to a smaller size in the same design, these difficulties will not arise. If a garment is to be made smaller, it is advisable to rip it all apart and recut each section to retain the style lines of the garment rather than to take it in in a few places.

The safe plan, when remodeling, is to fit a master pattern in muslin. (See *How to Make a Master Pattern*.) This pattern is then used as a guide for fitting the section when cutting. Such a master pattern should be made for children as well as adults; it will eliminate many tedious fittings and rippings.



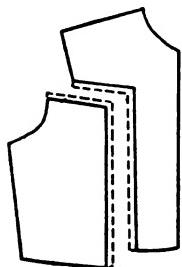
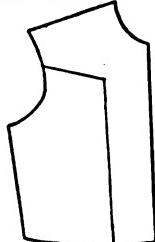
**Patterns**



**Improvising**

**Master pattern**

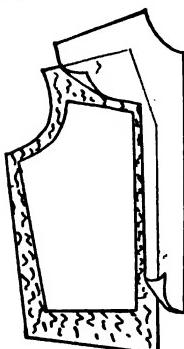
## Drawing designs



Plain front

## Plain pattern

## Marking the plain pattern



Illustrated patterns that *almost* fill the needs can be altered in the picture to conform to individual desires. Draw a yoke line, or an inset, on the picture, and darken the inset or yoke with pencil, thus illustrating the effect of two fabrics. With a little creative ability, a few individual ideas can thus be designed from one pattern. When the desired effect is secured, the pattern is marked in like manner and cut apart on the lines marked. With the addition of a seam allowance, the severed sections are ready to be used to cut the dress. It is advisable to *paste* extra paper onto these edges for the seam allowance.

The front of the waist is the main center of interest. Most of the average dresses have plain backs, both in the waist and in the skirt; the sleeves too are usually quite plain, therefore most of the style of the garment rests in the front section of the waist. It is the *waist*, therefore, that requires most of the attention in remodeling.

Assume that the dress to be remodeled has a plain front, possibly with a few tucks, darts, or gathers at the shoulder seam. Many dresses are now buttoned down the front; if this plan is to be followed, it will be necessary to add extra material. First, the design must be chosen. Then, the front must be cut to fill the requirements of the new model. It is always advisable to make the new model a trifle larger than necessary and to trim down the sewing lines after the final fitting.

If the garment is to be remodeled for the same individual, cut a paper pattern of the front before it is changed.

After the front is ripped apart so that it lies flat, cut a paper pattern from it, if the remodeled garment is to be made to the same size. Then pin the same darts or tucks in the paper as were in the original dress, or fold in small darts to represent the possible gathers. This makes it possible to curve the pattern to fit the bust.

Hold the pattern to the figure in front of a mirror and mark the desired yoke lines or vest lines on the paper. Crooked lines can later be straightened when the pattern is placed flat on the table. If a front yoke extends the full width of the shoulder, then a back yoke may also be made to balance the front design as well as give additional interest. A contrasting material would be very effective if it were correctly chosen. Short sleeves and a belt may also be added

in the contrasting material. An inset belt simulating a yoke effect may be added either to the bottom of the waist or to the top of the skirt. A peplum effect may be added if desired.

Another pattern might be marked with an inset section from shoulder to hem. Another might have a complete front in a vest effect, and still another might have the new material shirred into half the width of the shoulder and extended to the waist, or even, in a matching panel, to the hem. This panel could be shirred at the center front of the skirt for some figures.

The paper is cut apart into the pattern sections while it remains pinned into darts and tucks. All should then be flattened against the body while it is resting on the figure. The gaps made in the pattern when it is assembled will represent the spaces that will later be taken up in darts or gathers. These darts and gathers will be necessary to fit the curve of the bust and receding shoulders.

A plain dress front that has been cut in one piece can be made into a two-piece front or a shirtwaist style. On the paper pattern, mark a line from the end of the shoulder at the neck straight down the front, following an equal distance from the marked center-front line. When this front panel is cut from the pattern, it may be used to cut a new front from contrasting material, allowing two inches at the center front for an extension for a lap-over. By cutting the outer edge straight to the top, opposite the shoulder line, a revers will be made which can be folded back, thus giving an entirely new arrangement to the garment.

A band of the dress material may be used to face the front panel on the right side. Large buttons will add another touch of trimming.

A shirtwaist dress cannot fit as closely as a plain-front garment, for added ease must be allowed over the bust. Allow an extra inch from neck to waist on the dress side. Also do not forget to add seams to all pattern sections that are cut apart. It is advisable to pin extra paper to the edges as a reminder to add seams. Mark the center front line and all seam allowances.

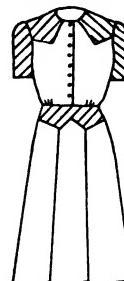
Buttonholes will end at the center-front line. Buttons are also sewed to the dress at the center-front line. Therefore, allow ample material beyond the center front when cutting.

#### Cutting the pattern

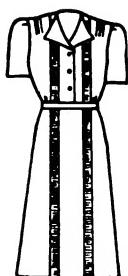
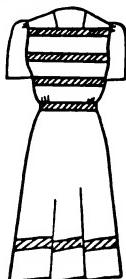
#### Variations of a plain front



#### Shirtwaist caution



## REMODELING

**Waist too small****Lengthening****The jumper dress****Folding double**

A dress has possibly become too small for the owner, usually the front of the waist and hips having become tight. The front of such a dress can be enlarged by setting-in lengthwise bands from shoulder seam to hem, leaving the same center-front design; or, the panel-front effect may be used. Contrasting material may be used for either model.

A complete new front may be made from contrasting material, using bands of the original dress for trimming to blend the completed front into one unit. Sleeves may also be trimmed with banding, especially if they too are made of the contrasting fabric.

Waists may be lengthened by in-setting two-inch bandings of contrasting fabric and placing the bands crosswise. The first band would finish the lower edge of a square neck, and two other bands would be placed below the top band, all of the bands being equally spaced.

Contrasting material may be used for pockets, outer facings, belts, and collars. White or colored vestees with collars attached, or separate collars, add a new note to an old dress.

It is often possible to make a jumper dress from a discarded model of good fabric without ripping all of the dress apart. Remove the sleeves, collar, facings, and neck finish, and any trimmings. Put on the dress and chalk-mark a deeper neckline and possibly a narrow shoulder. Mark but one-half of the blouse section.

The original armholes may be used for some styles, or they may be deepened with a strap shoulder effect made with a widened neck deep in front. The neckline can be made square, round, or oval.

After the desired effect has been marked, remove the dress, pin a fold at the center front, and pin together around the armholes and neckline. Then lay the dress flat on the table and baste through this marked line. This procedure will prevent the material from slipping when cutting both sides alike. Before cutting, mark a cutting line and follow this line carefully when cutting.

If the new line is cut *on a customer*, start at the center front and cut but *one* side, allowing for seams. Then fold back the cut-away edge and pin it to the matching side as a guide for cutting both sides alike.

Many dresses can be remodeled into a vestee effect. Vestees are usually made of plain fabrics, often washable, white being most generally used. White next to the face is becoming to most women; even a fold of white basted into the neckline of a dark dress changes its effect and will reflect brightness onto the face.

A vestee can be short or long. The waist of the dress may be opened down the entire front. The vestee must then have a full-length front and should extend the width of the bust across the front and at the waistline.

A vestee may be set into a plain-front dress by opening it down the center front as far as desired and folding back the edge to the neckline. This edge is then faced, with the vestee tucked under the dress and attached or not attached to the dress.

Plain-front dresses can be both enlarged and trimmed by applying an outer facing, cut in one piece, to the neck and center front. This facing must be cut on the same lengthwise thread of material as the part to be faced. (See *Facings*.) Figured fabric may be faced with contrasting plain fabric, usually the color of the background. If the fabric is figured, one of the brighter colors may be selected to use as a cording at the edge. This same effect may be used in a center-front opening by placing a vestee under the open center front and lacing the edges together.

The cotton fabrics in men's shirts offer many possibilities for reuse. When shirts are worn for office wear they are soon discarded because of a frayed collar edge, while the rest of the shirt may be relatively good. When the shirt is made of good fabric, it is well worth remodeling. Many garments can be made from men's shirts, as shirts for boys, blouses for girls, men's and boys' shorts, aprons, small boys' rompers, little girls' dresses, play suits, and sun suits.

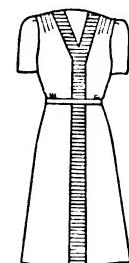
To prepare the shirt, rip it apart carefully. (See *Ripping*.) Cut off the seams only when the garment that is to be made is very small. Do not remove the front edges. Rip off the yoke and *cut off* the collar and cuffs. Rip open the underarm seams of the sleeves but not the back seams. The material should be washed and pressed flat before it is cut.

Arrange the pattern to the best advantage. If it is necessary to piece a corner, always make the piecing on the lengthwise threads of the material. Cut any piecing seams flat before cutting by the pattern.

Vestee



Plain fronts

Using men's shirts  
for remodeling

Remodeling shirts

**REMODELING**

The fabric in the shirt tail will be less worn and stronger than the upper part of the shirt. Therefore, use the lower part of the shirt first, sliding the pattern as low as possible. If any of the shirt is discarded, let it be the upper part.

**Making boys' shirts**

The same buttonholes can be used on boys' shirts, placing the top of the pattern to the upper part of the shirt by sliding it as low as the buttonholes will permit. For girls' blouses, reverse the pattern, placing the pattern with the top of the pattern to the bottom of the shirt, as far as the buttonholes permit. This will make the buttonholes on the opposite side for girls.

**Shorts**

Arrange the pattern for shorts to the best advantage, using the strongest portion of the material. Make the crotch double.

**Patchwork**

Patchwork can be used to good advantage for making housecoats. Make a loosely fitted muslin coat as a base. Over this, baste and sew bright-colored patches, either in design or hit-and-miss fashion. A feather stitch or button-hole stitch in variegated colored floss may be used to edge the patches. The coat is then lined. The lining should be cut from the coat *after* the patches have been applied, as the muslin will be somewhat smaller from much sewing.

**Children's dresses**

Many dresses discarded by adults can be remodeled for children. Fabrics with a small print are very appropriate to use. Large prints or wide stripes are seldom used for children's dresses, but plain-colored fabrics may be used in many ways. Prints in some fabrics may be removed. A product that will remove dye and bleach it to white is made by dye manufacturers and may be purchased at a drug store. The fabric may then be redyed to the desired shade—light shades in pastel colors for small children and darker shades for larger girls. Heavy fabrics of wool and crepe may be used for winter clothing and made into attractive dresses, jumper dresses, and skirts by adding a touch of color in the blouse or trim of the dress.

**Ribbon**

Ribbon, especially in grosgrain, adds an attractive touch of color and trimming to a plain dress or a dress that is being remodeled. Narrow ribbon is used for the small child's dress, and wider ribbon is reserved for older sister. Two narrow widths in harmonizing shades may be stitched together to form a trimming. If the right harmonies are in question, study the harmonies of color used in better-grade fabrics, possibly in a window display. Color har-

monies used in better-grade drape material also provide an excellent lesson. All of the colors in the dress should harmonize—the dress itself and all of the trimming. Cheap dyes do not always produce the best harmonies. It is therefore advisable to study the colors in the better fabrics.

Ribbon may be used to trim straight-edged collars, sleeves, pockets, and hems. Inset strips of the ribbon may be used. These strips may be used to cover a necessary piecing, possibly down the front of the waist or even the skirt. Try to follow a general dress design.

Color may be added to a plain dress in the form of piping (see *Piping*). Any bright harmonizing color may be used, and the piping is easy to prepare. It is stitched to one side of the seam before the two seam edges are joined. The seam is not stitched from the right side. If a cording foot is not available, the seam may be sewn by hand.

#### Corded piping

Colored or white rickrack may be used effectively as piping. If the dress is washable, the rickrack should either be set between the seam edges as piping, or both sides should be stitched flat to hold the points in place. Novelty trimmings may also be purchased as well as many colors of seam-binding. This binding may be used for the corded piping, basting heavy preshrunk kitchen cord between the folds of the binding.

Laces offer another effective trimming. Use narrow lace, usually gathered, on small dresses. The heavy thread on the edge of the lace should be drawn up to make the gathers. Ruffled lace around collars, pockets, yokes, and necklines give an added freshness to the garment. Test the washing qualities of a fabric before adding lace to it. If the dress is not washable, make removable collar and cuffs of white and trim it with the lace.

#### Laces

Plaid material gives a pleasing brightness to a dull-colored dress. It may be used as insets in bandings, yokes, collars, pockets, vest effects, or even in complete fronts with a collar made of the dress fabric.

#### Plaids

Any of the suggestions given in the illustrated dresses in this chapter may be used for older girls' dresses, and many may be used for younger children.

Men's suits may be remodeled into women's suits. Boys' suits and little girls' coats can also be made from them. Rip the suit apart, then clean the pieces and press them flat. If a woman's suit is to be made, do not wash the old suit;

#### Remodeling men's suits

**REMODELING**

but when using the material for children's clothes, the sections may be washed after ripping apart. For children's clothes, the large sections may be cut from the coat.

**Making women's suits**

Test the size before ripping. Measure the leg of the trousers at 8 inches above the cuff. If twice this measurement will fit the hips of the woman, a skirt can be made from the pants alone. But if the woman is larger than this measurement, the coat also must be used to make a part of the skirt. Rip the inner leg seam apart; the outer seam may remain sewed. Carefully trim off the pants material from the belt, front opening, and pockets.

The lower part of the pants will be the upper part of the skirt. The front of the pants will be the front of the skirt. The upper 12 inches of the pants may later be used for an inset box pleat. Therefore, do not *cut off* the length until the skirt length is measured.

Baste the full length of the skirt at the center front (see *Pleats*). This will be the center front of the pants. Baste up the back on a straight line, darting in the waist at both center back and side seams. Side darts might also be made.

Secure the exact length, allowing 12 inches for pleats. Face the hem if necessary. Set a pleat in at the center if desired (see *Pleats*).

**Coat**

Remove the sleeves and open the side seams and shoulders of the coat. Remove the collar from the back of the neck only. Do not disturb the outer edges of the collar or the front.

Lift the coat at the shoulders to fit the new armholes. Fit the coat at the waistline. Press the sleeve cap flat with a wet cloth. Since a man's sleeve cap has had the fullness shrunk out, it must now be stretched flat. Dart the sleeve cap for the woman's coat. Make the sleeve smaller. Pad the shoulders if necessary. Remove the buttons from the cuffs. If the coat is double breasted for the man, it may lap in the opposite way for the woman. But in the case of a single-breasted coat, large buttons may be sewed over the man's buttonholes and new ones worked on the right side of the coat.

**Larger skirt**

The larger women must use the whole suit for her skirt. The pants are used for the side sections. The back sections of the coat will be used for the upper part of the skirt panels, both back and front, and the remaining material will be used for the pleats at the bottom of the panels.

**Girl's coat**

A girl's coat may be made from a man's coat by using

the smaller widths as pleated sections, topped by a yoke both back and front. Pleat the sections, basting them flat; add the yoke, then cut from a plain coat pattern.

Mother's coat may be remodeled for daughter. The coat should be ripped apart even if it is to be made into a smaller size in the same model. Correct proportions can only be secured by fitting all sections. Lift the coat until the pockets are in the right position. Recut the coat at the top.

Worn overalls may be used to make work aprons. The lower part of the leg, when opened, will form the body of the apron. Patch pockets, stitched to place where needed, will give an added convenience.

Patching can be neatly made when using the iron and the slipstitch, basting from the right side of the patch. There will be no machine-stitching on the right side. Ragged-edged holes or tears should be trimmed to straight edges when possible. It is much easier to make an invisible patch with straight threads of material. Clip the four corners one-fourth inch deep. *Baste or press back* the edge evenly. Cut a scrap of matching material much larger than the opening—at least one inch larger on all sides. If the material is plaid or striped, the patch should be matched to the scrap before the scrap is cut.

Slide a heavy paper, magazine, or basting board into the garment under the hole, with the hole rightside up. Tuck under the scrap, match to position, and pin to place.

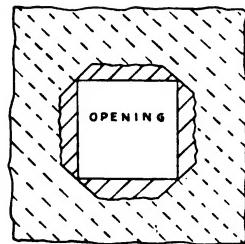
Baste the patch to the scrap from the right side so as to match every thread. Keep all threads straight. Use the slipstitch. Catch a thread of the patch, slide the needle into the fold of the pressed edge of the hole for a quarter of an inch, then catch another thread or two of the patch and slide the needle along the pressed fold. Continue to the corner. Take two catch stitches at each corner to hold them firmly in place. Remove bastings and pins. Press the patch. Turn the garment to the wrong side, patch side down; lift the seam and stitch on the crease, stitching from the seam side of the patch. Corners can be turned perfectly. Trim the corners of the scrap and press the seam open.

Wash the socks and press them flat. Pin a dart in the front of the ankle of one sock, producing a right angle, with the sole straight.

Cut a pattern of the sole. Mark on the pattern where the holes are located in the heel and toe. Remove the pat-

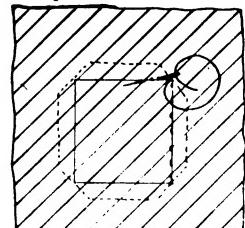
### Overalls

### Patching



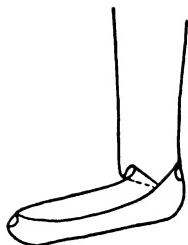
Wrong side of patch.

### Slip-basting the patch



Right side of patch.

### Resoling socks



tern. Mark a curved pencil line from heel to toe with the holes included in the sole section. Cut the pattern along this line. The result will be a pattern of the remodeled leg and sole. Allow seams when cutting. Allow one-fourth inch for seams on line A, line B, line C, and line D. (See illustration.) The bottom of the sole will be cut on a fold of a firm section of another sock.

Measure the sole to the heel before sewing; sew by hand if a soft seam is desired. Make two rows of fine stitches on the same line, backstitching every two inches and stretching slightly while sewing. Crease the seam open with the fingers and catch the edges of the seams to the sides of the sock. This will relieve any pressure of a seam on a tender foot.

## MAKING A MASTER PATTERN

### Fitting a plain dress

The basic lines of a master pattern must be secured through individual fitting, as figures, like faces, differ. Therefore, fit a plain dress to secure these basic lines.

Select a plain dress pattern opened down the front, with a regulation shoulder seam. If there are gathers at the shoulder or waistline, these may be folded into a dart for the master dress. If the skirt is cut in sections, pin the sections together, making the seams straight from waist to hem, thus pinning out all flare or pleats. Be sure to mark the center-front line of both the waist and skirt. Cut a muslin dress. Follow the rules given in *Fitting a plain dress* for fitting the garment *upward*. Fit a plain sleeve.

After the dress is fitted as desired, remove it and check the seams, basting the seams on both sides of equal width, unless the shoulders and hips are different. Press all the seams open to make a crease *under* each side of the seam. Press darts first to one side and then the other to mark both sides with a crease. Crease the center-front lines.

Rip the master dress apart. Machine-stitch all of the sewing lines with black thread, stitching on the pressed crease mark. Stitch down the center fronts and along all side seams, darts, and armholes. The neckline and hem may also be stitched. This master dress will be preserved but will not be used for a fitting guide.

### Preparing the pattern

### Fitting guide

The actual fitting guide will be made of heavy paper. Cloth does not form a flat, stiff, curved surface and is unsatisfactory to use for fitting purposes.

A cleaner's bag makes excellent master-pattern paper; it may even be cut double, thus producing the complete front of the pattern. Pin the pressed muslin dress sections onto the paper, carefully matching the center fronts. Use many pins, placing them along the sewing lines on the black stitching. Cut out the paper exactly like the muslin dress, allowing for seams, if desired. After the paper pattern is cut, place the muslin side down on the pressboard and fold back all sewing lines until the black thread is on the edge; then press the sewing lines onto the paper pattern. Be sure to press-mark carefully all dart lines, both in the front of the waist above the bust, or at the side, and below the bust-line. The ease given below the bustline in most patterns will be folded into darts and pressed into the pattern.

Creases on paper will not remain. Therefore, mark all sewing lines with a heavy pencil.

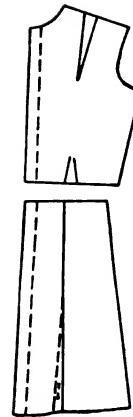
The master pattern is now ready for use.

A dress form can be made by sewing in the darts of a master cloth dress and pinning in the darts of the master paper pattern. Place the muslin pattern over the paper pattern, pinning carefully; then sew them together along the sewing lines, curving the pattern sections into the curved form of the figure. Make the back complete and the front complete, but do not sew the side seams together until treated. It will be easier to fit any garment in two sections, back and front separate; but a complete form may be made and stuffed with excelsior.

With the muslin master dress on top of the paper pattern, shellac the two together, applying the shellac to the cloth. The cloth will then adhere to the paper. The form will be stiff, but not so stiff that it cannot be folded and kept in a large dress box for future use. Pins can also be used to pin material to the master form without destroying the quality of the form itself.

Possessing this master form is an inspiration to create new designs. Remodeling can easily be accomplished over this form, new ideas will present themselves, various contrasting materials can be assembled and tested, folding under the edges to secure the effect before cutting.

Colored tissue paper makes effective designs. You may drape the paper folds and pin them to place. An individual with creative ability will be able to work out many new ideas and will enjoy her sewing to a fuller extent through creating her own ideas in clothes.



#### Making a dress form

#### Treating the master pattern

#### Designing

## USING A MASTER PATTERN

**The waist front**

The front of the average figure is not flat. Therefore the master pattern must be cupped up to simulate the figure for which it was fitted. Pin the darts in the paper, both above and below the bustline in the front. Crush newspaper and place it under the pattern to hold it into a curved position.

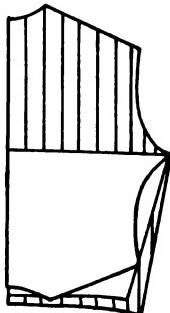
**The waist back**

The back will also be darted at the waistline by taking up the ease allowed in the tissue pattern to fit the curve of the back. The ease allowed at the back shoulder seam, usually one-half inch, can also be taken up into a small dart. This procedure permits the back to fit over the curve of the shoulder.

**The skirt back**

The back of the skirt usually is fitted with darts at the waistline. These, too, should be pinned into the paper master pattern to be used when fitting paneled backs or circular designs.

**Fitting the back**



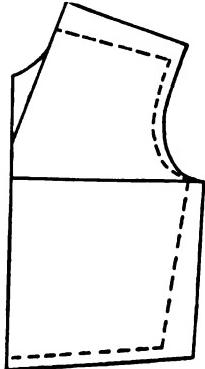
*Lifting* the dress to the pit of the arm is the secret of comfortable fitting. The back of the pattern may be fitted first. Fold the tissue pattern or dress section across the back from armhole to armhole at the sewing line and match it to the sewing line of the armhole of the master pattern; at the same time keep the center backs together. Smooth the dress around the master pattern, pinning in darts, if necessary, to fit it smoothly. The dress darts can later be eased into fullness.

The dress back must be marked and cut to fit the lines of the master pattern. It is advisable to place pins along the sewing lines and later to press the sewing lines onto the dress section.

The master paper pattern front has been shaped and pinned into a curved unit. The dress section should be made to conform to this pattern edge to make it fit correctly.

The underarm is the first place to contact, adjusting the dress front to the master pattern at the underarm, and at the same time keeping the straight thread of material down the front. If the garment is being made smaller or the same size, the center front of the dress section may be matched to the center front of the master pattern; but if the dress front is too small, the master pattern will indicate how much too small it is. The straight threads of material must be preserved, however, even though the center of the dress section does not quite meet the center front of the master pattern.

**Fitting the front**



If the dress front is made in sections, assemble the sections with pins and fit the assembled section to the master pattern as previously instructed. It may not be possible to lift the front to the pit of the arm because of the design of the neckline or the yoke effect. In such a case, the underarm may be patched carefully at the curve of the arm to bring the armhole to its correct position. This problem often occurs in large sizes when the arm is small in proportion to the body.

Skirts are fitted with the pleats and flares pinned closed. Fit the skirt flat to the hipline, seven inches below the waist. From the hipline, or the thighline on large thigh figures (see *Fitting*), the skirt drops in a straight line to the hem. Test the skirt fitting by sitting in a chair before too much of the side seams are taken in.

Both sleeves should be fitted into the master cloth dress. Fitting one sleeve only may draw the back to one side.

There is usually a dart in the back of the sleeve at the elbow (see *Sleeve Fitting*). The master sleeve is opened flat for fitting dress sleeves. The cloth sleeve must be made to fit the lines of the master sleeve pattern even though it may be necessary to set on a piecing.

### Assembling sections of waist

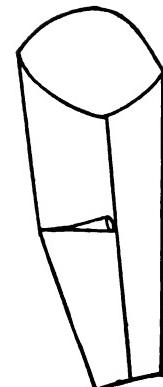
### Fitting the skirt

### Fitting sleeves

### Fitting unusual sleeves

Jacket sleeves, and sleeves with any unusual design, may be fitted over the master sleeve if it is folded and pinned into the shape of the arm, pinning up the dart at the elbow and folding the sleeve seam down the center of the body of the sleeve. Drape, pleat, puff, or gather any sleeve, just as the pattern or dress indicates, then fit it over this paper arm.

The master armhole and sleeve cap will fit together if fitted according to the rules given for fitting.



## CHAPTER 34

### Sewing Commercially

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#### Why dressmakers fail

Many women who desire to earn money by sewing realize that they do not have sufficient knowledge of the subject to enable them to conduct a profitable business. The amateur dressmaker often makes a failure when she sews by the "hit-and-miss" method. She does not understand the fitting problems encountered. Through her errors, her profits are "ripped" away and she finally loses her best customers.

It is surprising how quickly a customer will sense the inability of the dressmaker. Even though she may know nothing about sewing, she knows how clothes should look and should "feel." Perfect fitting always insures a comfortable dress. A misfit dress may "look" right but may "feel" most uncomfortable, and the customer will never return. Therefore, the dressmaker must understand her business.

#### How to succeed

Success in sewing commercially does not lie in the ability to slash wildly into material; rather it lies in learning to proceed step by step to eliminate all waste motion. This truth has been proved by the dress manufacturers. It is necessary to know how to handle different materials, what to do first, where to look for mistakes and how to avoid them, and how to secure the desired result the *first* time and avoid ripping. Many methods taught may secure the result eventually, but the struggle is too great for commercial purposes.

A dressmaker can earn as she learns. There will be no overhead expense, as she can work at home and do the work herself. She should at least take a complete course in sewing, such as is given in this book. The lessons will be a constant source of information as she encounters problems that have not appeared before. She should have a

thorough understanding of the subject of fitting different figures, not only through pattern alterations but also through fitting the actual dress after it is assembled and on the figure. Ninety-two of these problems are explained and illustrated in the lessons on fitting.

The dressmaker who instills confidence in her customer is the one who can copy any illustration. Many smartly dressed women like to design their own clothes and hire a dressmaker to make them. The dressmaker who can cut her own patterns can charge for the service. She is the *exclusive* dressmaker; her garments are distinctive. The customer is willing to pay a greater price for being able to have the garment she wants and to have it made correctly. Well-dressed women do not wear a cheap grade of clothes and do not object to paying for service rendered.

The dressmaker who can *fit* is the one who succeeds. A well-fitted dress is a pleasure to wear and the customer will return. Hard-to-fit women are driven to the ready-to-wear departments because they cannot fit themselves. The needle work may be exquisite and the style of the latest, but if the dress is not comfortable and does not fit, the customer is not satisfied and will not only *not* return but will advertise the fact. A satisfied customer is the dressmaker's best advertisement.

The successful dressmaker must also study and understand individual types of figures and be able to suggest the best styles for them. This is a service that should be rendered only by the better-priced dressmaker, for it often requires some time to select the desired pattern. The cheap dressmaker should ask the customer to select her pattern and bring it with the material. It is not necessary to know how to sketch to be an exclusive dressmaker. Many fashion books are available, and these will furnish all the ideas that are necessary; but it is essential to be able to harmonize different sleeves, different collars or trimmings, with dresses. This is often necessary, even when the pattern is purchased; the pattern must be changed to meet the needs of the individual.

*Tact* is also an essential of the successful dressmaker. She must have a quick and intuitive apprehension of what is necessary to hold the confidence of her customer. She must have an ever-ready discernment in avoiding any action or statement that would offend. One misspoken phrase

Confidence

Fitting

Types of figures

Tact is essential

## SEWING COMMERCIALLY

may be the cause of losing a good customer. She must always seem to be following the suggestions, while in reality she may have completely changed the ideas that her customer had when she arrived. For example: The customer arrives with the determination to have a certain dress. She has the material and the pattern. You see immediately that the pattern is not suitable for the figure. It will make her appear larger than her size. Do not say immediately, "This pattern will not do, you will have to select another one; this will make you look too big." Rather say, "Mrs. \_\_\_\_\_, I believe that if you had selected one of the straighter line patterns, this dress would have been very slenderizing." You have touched her sensitive spot—her size; she wants to look smaller and will do anything to accomplish that aim. She will even discard that pattern and buy another one. But if she had heard the first remark, she would have said, "Well, if you do not want to make it I will take it to Mrs. \_\_\_\_\_."

### Patience

Never lose patience and never lose your temper with a customer; assume that she is always right. Make her think so, if possible. If she insists that a pin should be moved, and you are certain that to move it would ruin the dress, move it; but make it as it should be later, if necessary.

### Neatness

The dressmaker should advertise her business by wearing neat, well-made, and well-fitted dresses. They need not be of fine material, but she should make them herself. The customer will ask, "Did you make that dress?" The dressmaker will surely be judged by her appearance.

### Business at home

As the dressmaker usually starts her business in her home, she should not fail to keep in mind that the home is also the place of business, and she should treat it as such. Odors of cooking should be carefully avoided. The reception room should be cleaned early in the morning to be neat and clean when the early customer arrives. There should be a waiting room where the customer will not have to encounter the family if she comes in the evening. Her coming is not a social affair, and she will appreciate it if you do not treat it as such. Attend strictly to business.

### Sewing by the day

In order to gain confidence, it is often wise to sew in homes by the day for a time until you have established the value of your work. One or two good customers will recommend you to others until your time will be filled. As a beginner, the wages will be small, but you can consider

it more as an apprenticeship and plan actually to start your own business when your confidence is established. Dressmaking in the homes of others will also provide many problems of alterations and remodeling that are all good lessons in dressmaking. Consider them as such, for they are often nerve-trying. Study each problem as it presents itself and remember how it was done and why. This knowledge may be of value to you later.

A dressmaking business can be advertised in a small way. A small advertisement in the "Situations Wanted" column may bring good results as a beginning. Returns may be slow, but if only two or three good customers respond, they will build the business if your services are what they expect. Printed announcements are excellent to send out to a selected mailing list. The quality of the announcement should represent the business that you expect to secure. Good customers expect good advertising and will expect good work from the advertiser. Do not mention prices. Secure the interest first; set the price last. Never set a price over the 'phone or upon the first arrival of the customer. Dresses differ as much in making as in materials. Customers will always say that they want "a simple, plain dress," but it may turn out to be a very complicated dress, and you will have given the price without knowing. Tell the customer that you cannot set the price without seeing the material and pattern, or offer a range of prices for the cheapest to the highest price.

It is the particular woman today who hires her clothes made. If she is satisfied with dresses like those her neighbor wears, or if she is easily fitted, she often buys them ready-made. But if the alterations cost as much as the garment and it is then not satisfactory, she prefers to have the dressmaker make it. Therefore you will find her particular and with ideas of her own. The dressmaker must be tactful enough to cope with these customers.

Before starting in business, it is well to time the hours spent on making your own clothes and then to decide on the price per hour you intend to charge for your time. A beginner will take a longer time to make a dress than will one who is experienced in sewing. For this reason, the cost per hour cannot be computed too high. More money will be made as experience is gained. It is better to make fewer dresses at a greater price and thus to save your health

#### How to advertise

#### The particular customer

#### Judging price

**Checking cost of ready-to-wear**

than to make many dresses at a cheaper price and work till the wee small hours of the morning to make a living.

Shop in the better dress departments of the department stores and learn the prices of the better-grade dresses, for this is the kind that you will make. Then shop for the same material in the fabric departments, learn the price of the materials of these dresses, and compute the amount of material that is in each dress. Subtract one from the other and you will have the price for the sewing, if you want to compete with the ready-to-wear departments. This same comparison does not balance when figured against the cheap ready-to-wear dresses. These dresses are made by pitifully cheap labor and cannot be equaled by the dressmaker. Not enough of the cheap-material dresses are made by the dressmaker to pay to set a price. Sew only the better fabrics, and learn to do the work sufficiently well to demand an adequate price for your labor.

**Learning the business**

There are very few *good* dressmakers. The many so-called dressmakers who have known nothing about fitting have ruined the reputation of all dressmakers for the customer, whose motto has become, "Beware of the dressmaker." The customer has had so much material ruined that she is cautious. Therefore, *learn* the business before your reputation as a dressmaker also is ruined. Build up the confidence of your customers. They are willing to give you a trial, but they will not return if they are not satisfied.

**How to raise prices**

It is always possible to raise the price of your work by eliminating the cheaper dresses. Tell your customers that you are now taking only the better dresses. This also will build confidence. In the beginning, it is necessary to accept any and all work that comes to the sewing room; but as work increases, the undesirable work and the undesirable customers can be eliminated by your being "too busy" to do the work.

**How to gauge work**

Keep work two weeks ahead if possible before you secure help. It requires at least two weeks' work in the shop to keep the cutting and fittings running evenly. The dress will be planned with the customer, and will later be cut and basted and laid aside for the first fitting, before any more work can be done on it. The customer may disappoint you for her appointment, and other work must take its place. The customer should never be reprimanded for not keeping

her appointment, although the dressmaker has been inconvenienced.

Sewing is a pleasure if all goes well and the hours are not too long. It is poor business to work far into the night to complete a dress for a thoughtless customer. If sewing is to be a vocation for several years, the health must be considered. When help is needed, it is best to secure a young girl who is willing to learn your methods and take your direction. Teach her to do the hand sewing that takes so much valuable time. If the sewing room has sufficient work to hire several women, one will be found more efficient than the other for certain work. This special work should be given to that woman.

**Health**

Self-confidence will be the first thing to master, and this will be developed by actually working out the problems as they are given in the lessons. As the problems are classified, the simple dresses can be made first; and as the more difficult dresses are made, the more difficult problems can be mastered. Refer to the lessons for the instructions, as all problems are covered.

**Self-confidence**

You can make simple dresses for your friends while you are learning. If you have previously been sewing many things for yourself, you can do remodeling, as this will teach you many lessons in designing. (See section on remodeling.)

**Simple dresses first**

As the lessons progress, new garments can be made, making the wash dress first, later the silk dress, and last the coats. Coats require very accurate work and will be good training. Good tailoring methods produce good results in dressmaking.

After the fitting lessons are learned, many avenues are opened. Sewing can then be started in earnest; you can do cutting and fitting, with the customer finishing the dress. You can also be in a position to teach others the art, commercializing on the knowledge that you have gained. You can thus pay for your lessons in a short time and at the same time be learning more about the business.

**Fitting essential**

Do not shop for your customers unless you make an additional charge. Insist that the customer match the materials and select the trimmings, after giving her suggestions. Only the exclusive dressmaker who charges high prices for her garments can furnish materials. All materials should be purchased by the customer and also the threads

**Shopping for  
customers**

and snaps, or findings, as they are called. If the dressmaker furnishes these extras, an additional charge for them should be made.

#### Exercising

A dressmaker should take some outdoor exercise every day; a brisk walk to the store is better than no fresh air (and when away from the house no one can call her). That is the one disadvantage of having a dressmaking shop in the home. Start working earlier so that you will not have to work late at night.

#### Nervousness

Avoid allowing the customer to press you for immediate service. The woman who has a dressmaker usually has many dresses and will respect you for keeping her waiting. If everything seems to go wrong with the dress, it is a sure indication that you are nervous. Lay the dress aside and do something else for a time. When the dress is taken up again, all will be well and sewing will run smoothly.

#### Light

Good light is important in any sewing room, whether you sew at home or go out by the day. Do not face the direct light, especially the sunny side of the room, but rather have the light at the window to one side. As one usually sits at the machine and sews, place the machine to the side of the window—a north window if possible. Place the machine so that the light falls to the left of the machine on the needle.

#### Cutting table for workroom

A good cutting table is essential. It should be 40 inches wide and as long as possible. The top can be made of rough boards, and it should be covered with one solid piece of linoleum. Any table should be covered so as to make a smooth surface to which the material can be pinned if necessary. The table should be higher than a dining table so that the worker can work conveniently without leaning over. Any table can be set on blocks or cans to bring it to the desired height. A light frame could be made by a carpenter and covered with wallboard. It could then be placed over the ordinary table and removed when necessary.

#### Ironing board

The ironing board and iron must occupy a place in the sewing room, for they will be used often. They can be placed under a drop electric light, if an extra window is not available. The cutting table can be placed in a corner with a drop light over it, or in the center of the room, if possible.

#### Sewing machine

Keep the sewing machine well oiled with *sewing machine oil*, not the household oil that is recommended for all purposes. This oil is too heavy and will soon clog the machine.

If the machine runs heavily, oil it well with kerosene and run it for a few minutes. This will cut the dry oil. Then oil with good oil. If used steadily, it should be oiled every few days. When cleaning off the surplus oil, wipe the bar above the needle. Since this part cannot be seen, it is usually forgotten, and it is from this place that the oil drops on the goods.

The fitting room should be equipped with a long mirror so that the customer can see the full length of her dress. If possible, this room should be separated from the waiting room, as many customers bring their friends to the fittings and the extra suggestions often cause confusion. The light should fall on the customer or directly on the mirror. A small platform raised six inches off the floor is convenient for hanging skirts. All fitting should be done in front of a mirror. The dressmaker should look in the glass at the dress. The mirror will show defects that cannot be detected with the eye.

**Fitting room**

Stand back of the customer for all fitting, if possible. The customer wants to watch the fitting in the mirror and does not want her view obstructed. Fit the dress rightside out and make all alterations later. (See *Right-side basting*.) Set the sleeves from the right side and hang the skirt according to the directions given in *Hanging skirts*. The fitting of the hips should be tested as the customer is seated, so provide a straight chair for the fitting room.

**Fitting**

The dressmaker should fit the dress as she thinks best and then ask the customer if it is satisfactory. Never ask her advice as to the method of fitting. She is paying the dressmaker for this work, and the dressmaker should know what is to be done.

The length of the hem should be decided by the customer. She may ask your advice about the length, and it will then be advisable to pin up the length suggested and see the effect. If the customer is changeable, it may be best to pin up the hem all around, as she may change her mind.

**The hem**

Always converse with the customer in complimentary terms about the dress, but be businesslike and not gushing. Ask all questions so that the answer will be in the affirmative. If the neck should be lower, ask if she does not think that the neck would be more becoming if it were a trifle lower. Make a definite assertion and let her confirm it. This instills confidence in the mind of the customer.

**Affirmative answers**

**Appointments**

Every sewing room should have an appointment book. All appointments should be written: the date, the name, and the hour for the fitting. Opposite the name, write the pattern number decided upon and the book from which it was selected, also the number of the page in the book. This procedure is important, as the busy dressmaker may confuse the designs. If a price has been set on the work, this also should be noted.

**Measurement slips**

Measurement slips should be provided for measurements of the customer. Several can be made by hand with carbon paper. Use the set of measurements given on page 242. Place the name, address, and phone number of the customer on this slip. Keep this list of names and addresses; it may be valuable later.

**Pattern books**

It is always necessary to have several pattern books in the waiting room to use for selecting patterns or designs. Keep only the latest books; too many books are confusing. The customer will think it is necessary to look through all the books, no matter how many there are to see. If just the latest books are in evidence, she will select more quickly. Keep the old books in the workroom for reference. They may be valuable for ideas when it is necessary to change the design of a pattern.

**Finished fitting**

It is always best to have a finished fitting. The changing of a snap or the making of some minor alteration will often make a more satisfied customer. The garment should then be carefully packed in a small suit box. Such boxes are sold by large paper companies by the hundred. It will pay to place an order for at least a hundred, together with a ream of cheap tissue paper, to use for packing.

**Packing**

To pack the dress, lay it out on the table with the front of the dress uppermost, sleeves out to the side. Pick it up at the center front so that the first fold will be down the center front with the back on the inside. Lay this flat. Then fold the circular part of the side of the skirt over to the front and the sleeves to the front, making the dress as narrow as the width of the box, and keeping it as flat as possible. Place a sheet of tissue paper in the box; lay in the bottom edge of the skirt and fold the skirt back to the width of the box. If the dress is sheer, crush tissue paper and place between the folds. Lay the dress back and forth in the box like pleats, placing the neck and collar of the dress on the top with the tissue between the folds.

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